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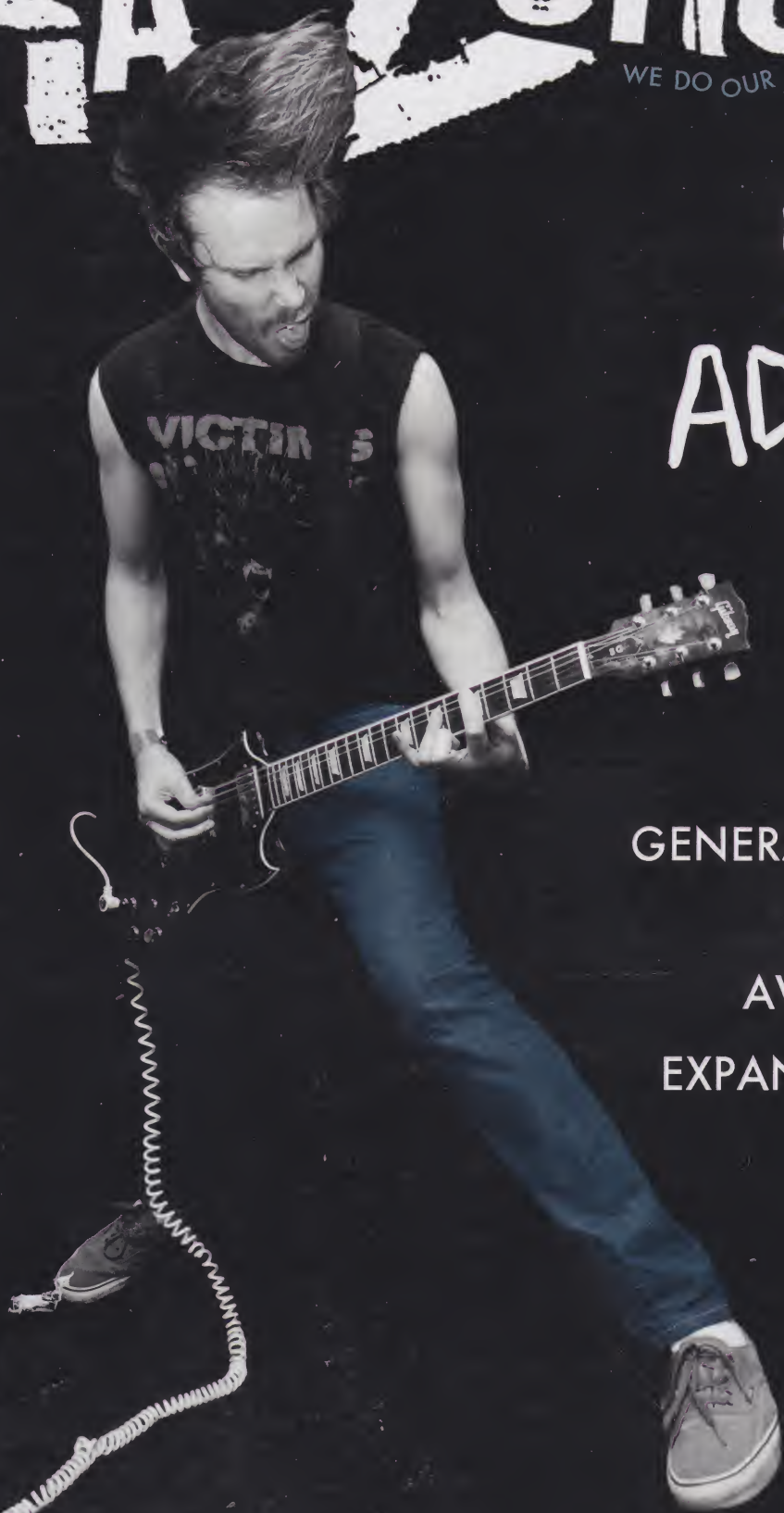
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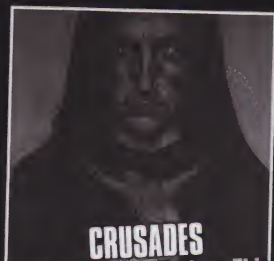


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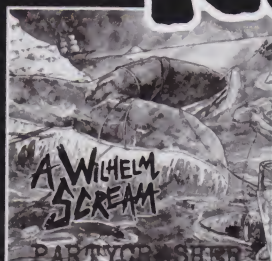


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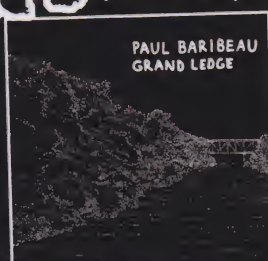
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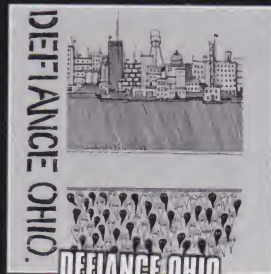


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Razorcake provides consistent coverage of do-it-yourself punk culture that you won't find anywhere else. We believe in positive, progressive, community-friendly DIY punk. We do our part. That hasn't changed in thirteen years and it's not about to change.

DIY punk culture is often misrepresented, misunderstood, and the target of corporate exploitation. Razorcake supports a legit community of punk music and culture as the only bona fide 501(c)(3) non-profit music magazine in America.

Our bi-monthly fanzine is a one-of-a-kind resource for the DIY punk community. Over the years, Razorcake has developed this resource to help document every facet of this culture. The Razorcake Gorsky umbrella also includes book publishing, record pressing, live shows and readings, and a thriving web presence that maintains weekly podcasts, webcomics, and videos.

Our open participation policy means anyone can become a contributor. Currently, Razorcake offers a forum for over 180 long-term independent volunteer writers, photographers, illustrators, and musicians from around the world. We take pride in our scenes and represent them internationally. We also distribute the magazine to over twenty countries.

DIY punk is an exciting, evolving culture that can thrive outside of corporate interests. Our goal is to continue operating a modern framework where this community of independent, DIY punk can continue.

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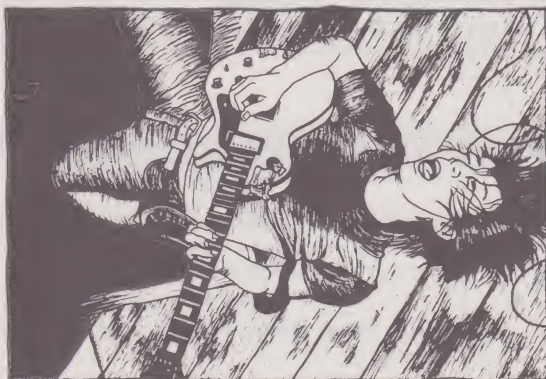
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"Unspoken" Philosophies

Sometimes, I can't believe punks don't get that Razorcake is all for feminists, POC, LGBT, and the lower and middle classes. We're also completely against misogyny and large corporations. I'm proud that our interviews, reviews, and staff reflect diversity of gender, sexual orientation, geography, age, and race among our family of DIY punk dingdongs, misfits, weirdos, and outcasts. Razorcake runs by example, not by spouting lifestyle propaganda designed to appear "inclusive" just to separate you from your money.

What's difficult to digest is that this collective periodically gets dismissed as angry, white guys. It's unfortunate and frustrating. I partially understand it if you're merely doing a quick flip through Razorcake.

Yes, I'm a white male. I couldn't control that.

Hell, yes, I'm angry. The world remains wildly cruel, racist, sexist, and classist. That is how—to me—Razorcake proves there is another way. Fuck you if you dismiss DIY punk as a "niche." I call it a life. Razorcake has always had an open solicitation policy—if you're knowledgeable about DIY punk, can write and aren't an asshole, follow submission protocol, and meet quality expectations. Understand that no one gets financially enriched for creative content. You're invited to see if we can work together. I don't care if you're striped like a tiger, are an infant, or have sex organs that make words like "male" and "female" uptight binary genital assumptions.

In a non-profit zine with a ton of moving parts, I engage with layers of volunteers. There's a public side—the columnists, reviewers, and interviewers. There's an even deeper barely-seen "back end"—editors, graphic designers, illustrators, website and database updaters, photographers, proofers; it's a long list. Most of you may not know Kari

Hamanaka, Candice Tobin, or Donna Ramone. Yet, I'm in constant contact with them. Razorcake wouldn't exist in its current form if it wasn't for these women's constant hard work and guidance.

I made an in-house call several months ago to all of our regular contributors to vouch for new Razorcake reviewers. We average three hundred reviews every two months. I had to cut it off at twenty potential reviewers. On one hand, wow, cool. People really want to help us—people who meet our criteria. Skilled writers. New perspectives. On the other hand, I was bummed. Only three of the twenty were women.

I wondered "Where's the disconnect?" We all know that finger pointing is a competitive punk sport, while solutions are often shrugs or middle fingers. It really bothered me. How do we tip the scales the other way and get more women in the public-facing side of Razorcake? The answer proved simple. Directly, *explicitly* ask the many talented women we know. Have all of our contributors ask other women on our behalf. "Please write for us. Give it a shot. See if you like it."

This was three months ago and I already see the bow of the Good Ship Razorcake steadily turning within our pages into more gender-diverse waters. It makes me happy. You have my word that I will keep watch, looking into the distance, for that faraway place where we're all equal and count for something.

If you are a woman and would like to conduct interviews, write reviews, or are up to write a bi-monthly webcolumn, I encourage you to drop me a line via the "Contact" on razorcake.org. We'll start the process, together.

Thank you.

—Todd Taylor

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December 1st, 2013

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"...the fact is when you're flooded with something, you're more likely to rot away, to disappear entirely, than if you dry up slowly. Ask the Egyptians, ask anyone."

—Elizabeth McCracken,
The Giant's House

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Pat Fear/Bill Bartell.



Bloody-nosed Jenny Angelillo of Neighborhood Brats, Awesome Fest 7
photo by Rachel Murray Framingheddu

THANK YOU: I've always had a soft spot for that curly-Q guitar cord ever since seeing that the Clash used 'em thanks to Amy Adoyzie and Marc Gärtner for the Steve Adamyk Band cover design and photo; Go read a Pam Houston novel on your lunch break thanks to Brad Beshaw for his illo. in Sean's column; Who brings guns to a coffee fight? A-holes. That's who thanks to Craig Horky for his illo. in Jim's column; Always start with the No. 4 first and work your way down if you're unsure about your melon thanks to Steve Larder for his illo. in Cassie's column; Meaning is meaning less and less. It's almost meaningless, but the pay's okay thanks to Alex Barrett for his illo. in Norb's column; Stinky head, unforgettable memories thanks to Jackie Rusted for her illo. in the Chicken's column; "Hell yeah, I'm worried" thanks to Bill Pinkel for his illo. in Dale's column; In that light, we all look like we have doll hair thanks to Sarah Whitlam for her Jello Biafra photos in Nardwuar's column; Playing the Arrivals "Simple Pleasures in America" on repeat thanks to Chris Pepus and Evan Wolff for the "Expand Civil Rights to Include Social Class" article and illos.; Face melting meets toe tapping thanks to Lory Gil, Udea Yosuke, and Matt Average for the Replica interview, photos, and layout; Words. They mean something in every language. You should never put "a" at the end of "Zorro" and think it means a sly-like-a-fox lady thanks to Rene Navarro, Richard Davila, Jimmy Alvarado, Ian Absurdo, Felipe Navarro Delgadillo, and Vincent Medina for the Generacion Suicida interview, interview research, and photos; If Ottawa is Canada's Washington DC, are they fixin' for a Revolution Winter any time soon? thanks to Patrick McEachnie, Marc Gärtner, Kelsey Hoffman, and Amy Adoyzie for the Steve Adamyk Band interview, photos, and layout; "Totally not peacocking"! Polar bear! Kitty cats! Group screams! Thanks to Kevin Dunn, Lauren Measure, Rachel Murray Framingheddu, Paul Silver, and El Diablo for the Awesome Fest 7 article, layout, and photos; Over the past thirteen years, Razorcake reviews something new very six hours. #77's rotation of music, zines, books, and video reviewers—in roughly the order they turned their reviews in: Ryan Leach, Sean Arenas, Rich Cocksedge, Kurt Morris, Rick Ecker, Ryan Nichols, Keith Rosson, Juan Espinosa, Sal Lucci, Billups Allen, Camylle Reynolds, Chad Williams, Matt Werts, John Mule, Michael T. Fournier, Sean Koepenick, Jim Joyce, Steve Adamyk, Brent Nimz, Craven Rock, Norb, Matt Seward, Matt Average, Jimmy Alvarado, Ty Stranglehold, Art Ettinger, Bryan Static, Dave Williams, Ian Wise, Adam Mullett, Chris Terry, James Meier, Paul J. Comeau, Mark Twistworthy, Jim Woster, Steve Hart, Simon Sotelo, Nicole Macias, Bianca Barragan, Garrett Barnwell, Rene Navarro, and Tim Brooks; The following folks stepped forward to help us do our part over the past two months. Without their help, we'd get a lot less done: Candice Tobin, Kari Hamanaka, Donna Ramone, Matthew Hart, Phill Legault, Chris Baxter, Mary Clare Stevens, Marty Ploy, Rene Navarro, Janeth Galaviz, Mars Bravo, Rishbha Bhagi, Adrian Chi, Megan Pants, George Rager, Alex Martinez, Jimmy Alvarado, Noah Wolf, Matt Average, Ever Velasquez, Joe Dana, Christina Zamora, Juan Espinosa, Sean Arenas, Aaron Kovacs, Nicole Macias, Jordan Anne Jacobi, Yvonne Drazan, Julia Smut, Jenn Witte, Dave Eck, Chris Pepus, George Lopez, Tim Burkett, Jeff Proctor, Josh Rosa, Toby Tober, Sal Lucci, Johnny Volume, Jennifer Federico, Nighthawk, Marcos Siref, Steve Thueson, Evan Wolff, Eryc Why, Ronnie Sullivan, Marcus Solomon, Bill Pinkel, Kurt Morris, Jason Armadillo, Laura Collins, Nation of Amanda, Caitlin Hoffman, Billy Kosta, Derek "Tanning Bed" Whipple, Christine Arguello, Susan Chung, Jenn Swann, Andrew Wagher, and Mike Kriebel.

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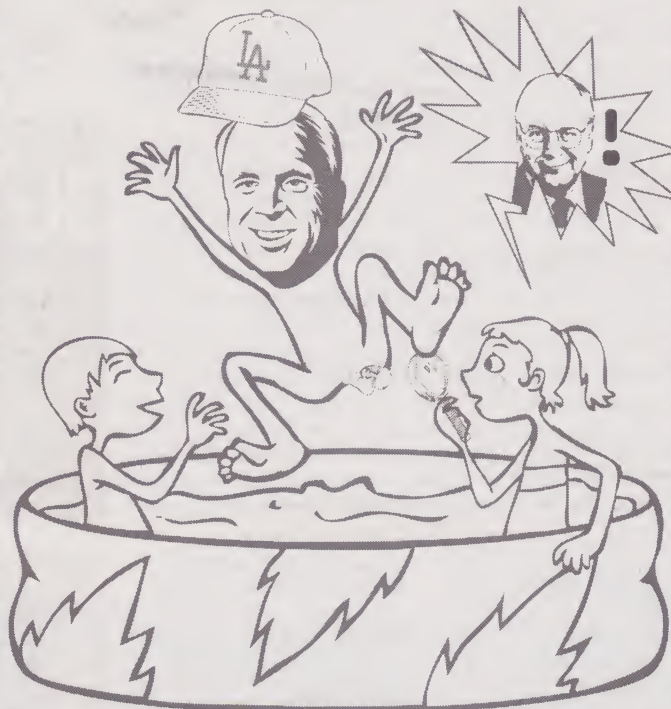
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Todd Taylor, Sean Carswell, Dan Clarke, Katy Spining, Leo Emil Tober III, Catherine Casada Hornberger, and Daryl Gussin.

This issue of Razorcake and the last two months of razorcake.org were put together by: Todd Taylor, Daryl Gussin, Sean Carswell, Skinny Dan, Katy Spining, James Hernandez, Candice Tobin, Kari Hamanaka, Donna Ramone, Matthew Hart, Phill Legault, Chris Baxter, Mary Clare Stevens, Marty Ploy, Rene Navarro, Janeth Galaviz, Mars Bravo, Rishbha Bhagi, Adrian Chi, Megan Pants, George Rager, Alex Martinez, Jimmy Alvarado, Noah Wolf, Matt Average, Ever Velasquez, Joe Dana, Christina Zamora, Juan Espinosa, Sean Arenas, Aaron Kovacs, Nicole Macias, Jordan Anne Jacobi, Yvonne Drazen, Julia Smut, Jenn Witte, Dave Eck, Chris Pepus, George Lopez, Tim Burkett, Jeff Proctor, Josh Rosa, Toby Tober, Sal Lucci, Johnny Volume, Jennifer Federico, Nighthawk, Marcos Siref, Steve Thueson, Evan Wolff, Eryc Why, Ronnie Sullivan, Marcus Solomon, Bill Pinkel, Kurt Morris, Jason Armadillo, Laura Collins, Nation of Amanda, Caitlin Hoffman, Billy Kosta, Derek Whipple, Christine Arguello, Susan Chung, Jenn Swann, Andrew Wagner, and Mike Kriebel.

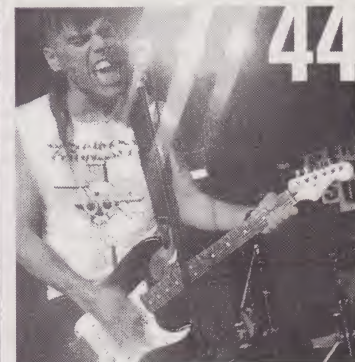
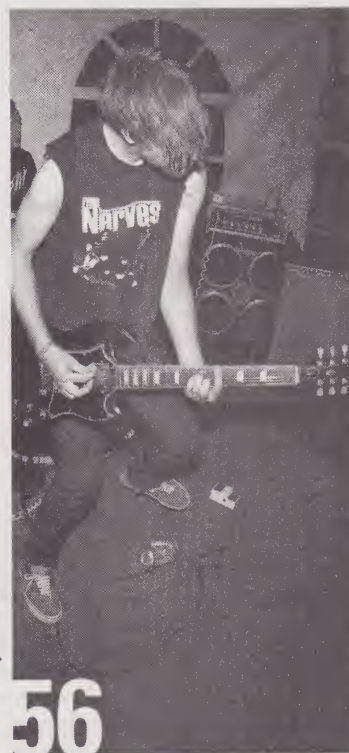
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"Even shit has its uses. Fertilizer. Fuel. Oh, yes. But to serve these purposes it must be ground to bits. Or burned."

—Saladin Ahmed, *Throne of the Crescent Moon*

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This issue of *Razorcake* is made possible in part by grants from the City of Los Angeles, Department of Cultural Affairs and is supported by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles Arts Commission.



A MONKEY TO RIDE THE DOG

SEAN CARSWELL

"I spent the summer reading books by women authors."

Girl Books and Me

I spent the summer reading books by women authors. It wasn't an experiment or a project. I didn't have a specific purpose in doing it. I just started doing it accidentally and ended up doing it on purpose. Once it became intentional and I started telling people about it, their reactions taught me something about what people think it means to be a man in contemporary society.

A few authors got me started on this. First was Pam Houston. I was scheduled to read at a book festival in May. Pam Houston was the headliner. A few days before the festival, I was on campus for final exams. I didn't have anything to read while my students did their work, so I went over to the library and checked out a Pam Houston book. My plan was to read a couple of stories and, when I met Pam at the festival, act like I'd read the whole book by just focusing on those stories. This is one of the talents you learn when you become an English professor: how to act like you've read everything.

Only the Pam Houston book is awesome. I couldn't put it down. My students could've called tutors and grad students to come in and write their exams for them and I wouldn't have noticed. I was totally wrapped up in the book. I was also a little perplexed. The male characters in this book were exactly like the male characters in my early books: rough, drunken, working-class dudes who go around steadily fucking up. And this book had been huge. It was a bestseller when I was an undergraduate English major; copies of it are in every bookstore you walk into and have been there for twenty years. Why had no one ever recommended it to me?

Maybe because the book is called *Cowboys Are My Weakness*. Who would expect a punk rocker to like a book with that title?

Maybe the bigger reason no one recommended it to me had something to do with gender.

When I met Pam a few days later, we chatted about a bunch of stuff. Among the topics of conversations were the VIDA statistics. VIDA is an association of women writers who have tracked the statistics regarding publications and reviews of women writers in prestigious publications. They've found that, over the past several years, most book reviewers in prestigious publications are men, and they review mostly books by men. It's similar for

editors of prestigious lit journals: mostly men publishing men. The numbers are undeniable. A gender bias does exist.

As Pam and I discussed this, I thought about my own book reviews. I've done tons of them over the years. I try to balance the gender of the authors I review inasmuch as I can. I don't know what my statistics would be. Probably leaning more male. I'm probably part of the problem.

When I teach classes, I consciously balance the authors we study. I know what my statistics are there: fifty percent of each gender. I make sure of that. But when I read for pleasure, I read almost all men authors. I realized that at the book fest. I didn't have a specific plan to change it.

During one of the festival events, we were all in a bookstore. I found a copy of a Megan Abbott novel. Abbott is one of my favorite crime writers. I hadn't seen this particular book of hers, so I picked it up and read it over the next couple of days. This book reminded me of some of Yoko Ogawa's work. It triggered me to go on an Ogawa kick. I reread three of her books. At that point, I was five books into the summer. All were by women authors. I decided to stick with the trend.

The next few books I read were ones I already had on my shelves. Some, I'd carried around for years and never opened. I kept them with the best of intentions. When I finally picked them up, I recognized that they raised eyebrows. I got a couple of funny looks when I read, for example, Isabel Allende's *House of Spirits* out in public. When I described the book to others by saying something like, "It's about three generations of women in Chile; they're kind of magical," my masculinity was questioned.

Years ago, when I read *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, sometimes in public, people's reactions were overwhelmingly supportive. If I described it as being about three generations of men in Colombia who are kind of magical, other men wanted to read the book.

In mid-June, I was down at Skylight Books in LA. It's one of my favorite bookstores in the world. I was looking for a couple of books in particular, both by women authors. Because Skylight is a bit of a drive for me, I looked online to make sure they had those books in stock. Their online catalog said

they did. I couldn't find the books when I was there, so I asked an employee. He checked his catalog. The last copy of one had sold earlier that day. The other was mysteriously missing. So he offered recommendations. He asked me if I'd read Bukowski. I had. He pointed out *The Orphan Master's Son* and asked if I'd heard of it. I had. I heard of it when every review outlet reviewed it last year, and I heard of it again when it won the Pulitzer Prize.

He recommended a few more books by men authors to me. I told him that I was only reading women authors for the summer. This stumped him. He had no suggestions. He could've picked the low hanging fruit. He could've pointed to the other book by one of the authors I'd been asking about, which was on the shelf right next to us. He could've mentioned that a woman author was reading at Skylight that very night. He could've said, "Hey, Cheryl Klein is reading here tonight. Have you checked out her stuff? It's awesome."

I have checked out her stuff. It is awesome.

But, back to the Skylight employee. I don't mean to pick on him. He seemed like a good guy. I like that he knows his books by men authors. His endorsements were good ones. He's one up on most Barnes & Noble employees who don't seem to read at all. He's several notches up from the robots at Amazon. And I can't blame him for looking at me—a guy dressed in Dickies and a skate shop T-shirt—and suggesting Bukowski. To his further credit, when he realized he couldn't recommend any books by women authors, he said, "I can't believe this. I'm ashamed of myself. I need to read more books by women."

I bet, over the past few months, he's done exactly that.

The response from the Skylight employee matched the responses I got from most of my male friends and family members when I talked about reading only women authors for the summer. They seemed hard-pressed to come up with any recommendations. They seemed a little stunned to realize that they hardly read books by women at all. A quick glance at VIDA statistics—showing that women are far more balanced than men in their reading and that men generally don't read many books by women—suggest that my friends shouldn't be surprised. They're



BRAD BESHAW

I just started doing it accidentally and ended up doing it on purpose.

part of the overall trend. They're acting like most male readers.

Most of the suggestions I got amounted to, "After you're done reading women authors, you should check out [insert book by man author]." In every case, I did not get the sense that my friends were dismissing women authors. They were just suggesting what they knew. To be fair to them, many of the recommendations came after people had read my latest novel, *Madhouse Fog*. Apparently, my book shares a lot in common with Philip K. Dick novels. I haven't really read Dick. This was the summer when everyone seemed to be telling me that I needed to.

The biggest questions to arise from all of this, for me at least, was why do so many male readers read so few female authors? My unscientific answer is twofold. The first part comes from Nancy Drew.

When I was a kid, most boys of my generation—like the boys of the previous few generations—read Hardy Boys books. Most girls read Nancy Drew. We were all taught as kids that the Hardy Boys were boy books and Nancy Drew were girl books. Sometimes, when I was hard up for something to read

as a kid, I read my sister's Nancy Drews. I did this secretly, so no one would think I was being girly. I also found out the truth: Nancy Drew mysteries are exactly like Hardy Boys ones. The only difference is an arbitrary rule that assigns gender to books.

But, from the earliest time as kids, we learn that gender distinction.

The second part of my answer comes from recommendations. Because there is no real mainstream media coverage of books—and because books are rarely part of our cultural conversation—we tend to hear about books through word of mouth. Some of these recommendations can be awkward. Imagine one man says to another man, "I just finished reading the new Laura Moriarty book. The way she deals with the complexities of mother-daughter relationships is amazing." It's a perfectly valid thing for him to say. It also calls into question his masculinity.

And this is the crux of the difference. For women, there is a lot of flexibility in how they construct their gender. Feminism made sure of this. Ask most women what it means to be a woman, they'll tell you something like, "It means whatever I want it to mean."

Men haven't made that progress. Masculinity is much more rigid. Ask a man what it means to be a man, he'll probably come up with specific characteristics. Men watch football and drink beer. They eat meat. They don't take shit from anyone. If the man is being more candid—because real men aren't PC—he'll probably say being a man means not being a pussy or a fag.

This ideology pollutes so much of men's contemporary lives. The roots go far deeper than we realize. We may negotiate with a lot of these arbitrary gender constructions. We may skip out on football and a lot of the more anti-intellectual parts of the definition of what it means to be a man today. But that ideology still pops up where we least expect it. We still perpetuate it down to the books we choose to read and recommend. It's a little creepy.

—Sean Carswell

To see my picks for cool novels by women, go to seancarswell.org



LAZY MICK

JIM RULAND

**"Your enmity
has made an
enemy out
of me."**

The Price of Coffee in Connecticut

Starbucks Corp. Chief Executive Howard Schultz waded into the gun debate on Sept. 17 with the announcement that the coffee chain would ask its customers not to bring their guns to Starbucks. Previously, Starbucks' policy regarding open carry had been "we permit it in states where allowed and we prohibit it in states where these laws don't exist."

Sounds sensible, right? Lately, as Schultz lamented in his letter, open carry enthusiasts have used this policy to stage in-store Starbucks Appreciation Days. Those days go something like this: A pro-gun activist organizes a group of people to show up at their local Starbucks and exercise their right to bear arms. This is either a typical day in the neighborhood or it scares the shit out of everyone in the store, depending on where you live.

The language used to promote these events suggests that Starbucks supports the rights of gun owners and the gun owners are showing their appreciation by carrying weapons and drinking lots of coffee.

This, however, isn't the case. These events, Schultz wrote, "disingenuously portray Starbucks as a champion of open carry."

Like many ideas fostered by pro-gun activists, they are a distortion of a much simpler truth, i.e. Starbucks policy is to obey the laws. Duh. This is what some pro-gun activists do, they distort the language and change it to mean what they want it to mean. Ergo, "Starbucks Appreciation Day" means "fuck you, this is my right, you can take my gun when you pry it from my cold dead fingers," or something along those lines.

The local Starbucks is a gathering place in my community. Local cyclists meet before and after their rides. Students study. Retirees gather to talk about their health issues. And a stream of harried parents swing by in-between soccer games and dance recitals for overpriced milk products. (Starbucks, I contend, is not a coffee company, but a milk company. Brewed coffee and espresso are reasonably priced. It's the seasonal lattes, mochas, and Frappuccinos loaded with milk and sugar that are making the company rich. I don't go to Starbucks if I want a good cup of coffee. I go to Starbucks if I want a place where I can work for an hour or three with nice people, clean facilities, air conditioning/heating, free Internet, decent coffee, and a limited menu of reasonably healthy food choices.)

My local Starbucks is located on the way to the high school where my wife Nuvia teaches, so she spends a lot of time there grading assignments, preparing lessons, and emailing students and their parents. She knows all of the baristas, or "store partners" as Schultz calls them, and they know her. They work hard—a hell of a lot harder than I used to work when I was a coffee jerk in North Hollywood in the early '90s—and don't get paid a lot of money. I imagine your local Starbucks serves a similar purpose in your community regardless of how you feel about Starbucks, chain restaurants, and corporate culture.

California, thankfully, has banned the open carry of firearms since January 1, 2012—nearly a year before the tragedy at Sandy Hook took place. I can't imagine how stressful it would be for patrons and partners at my local Starbucks to be confronted with armed coffee drinkers. In California, I'm guessing most people would be upset by it even if it was legal, but I'm sure there would be some who wouldn't be bothered by it at all. Some guests would complain about the guns. Some would complain about the complainers. The baristas would be thrust into a politically charged debate. And for many patrons and partners it would be personal as well.

According to Slate.com, as of this writing there have been at least 8,883 gun deaths in the United States since Sandy Hook. (For perspective, that's twice the number of U.S. troops killed during the entire campaign in Iraq. Of course, many tens of thousands of civilians were killed. I'm not trying to be disingenuous here.) With so many Americans killed each month, each week, each day, it's getting harder and harder to find Americans whose lives haven't been touched by gun violence.

Policing the store is not a situation you want your Starbucks barista to deal with. Can you imagine?

"What can I get started for you today?"

"I'll have a Grande Pumpkin Spice Latte, a coffee cake, and could you ask the armed men outside to leave?"

But that's exactly what happened on August 9 when Nuvia and I went back to Connecticut to visit our friends—whose daughter, Avielle, was killed at Sandy Hook Elementary on December 14, 2012—and discovered that pro-gun activists had decided

to hold a "Starbucks Appreciation Day" at the Starbucks across the state, including—incredibly—at the store in Newtown.

I'm not making this up. This actually happened.

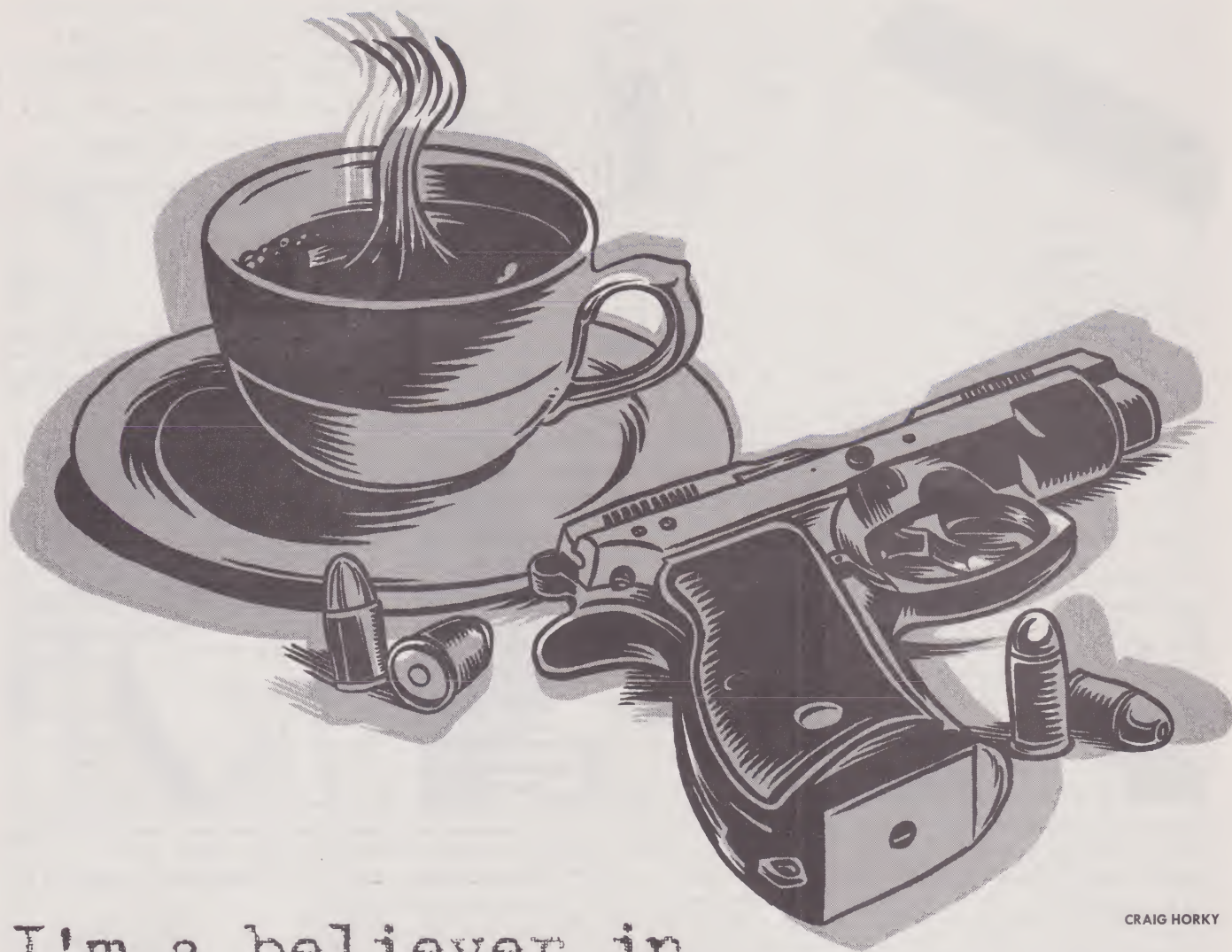
Pro-gun activists in Connecticut thought it would be a good idea for large numbers of armed civilians to show up in the tiny New England town where less than nine months before a gunman had shot and killed six teachers and twenty children in their classrooms.

I don't know who organized this event. I heard it was a group from Richfield, which is a community to the north of Newtown, but I don't know that for certain. I just find it hard to believe that it never occurred to the organizers that this might not be such a good idea. Did anyone raise their hands and say, "Hey, this might upset some people in the community who have already been through an awful lot"? How did the organizers fail to consider how their actions might make the people of Newtown feel? This is what empathy is all about. It's the ability to put one's self in another's shoes and try to imagine what they might think, how they might feel.

But the most vocal pro-gun activists aren't interested in empathy. They are only interested in rights. At least that's the jargon the NRA uses today. They prey on poor, rural whites—a group that has lost jobs, homes, and socio-economic status and is feeling very much infringed upon and worried about losing more ground, especially to those who are not poor, not rural, and not white. The last thing they want to do is relinquish their rights.

I kind of understand this. When I was a student in Arizona, I met and befriended a number of people who loved guns and were deeply suspicious of the government. They made their own ammo and modified their weapons. The showdowns with the Feds in Ruby Ridge and Waco spoke to them in ways that didn't speak to me.

When I was in the Navy, the people who were responsible for small arms were the Gunner's Mates. The Gunner's Mates handled and stored the weapons and ammunition and conducted small arms training for the crew. When the ship was in port, a Gunner's Mate roved the decks. That way if a crew of terrorists stormed the ship and took over the quarterdeck, there would



CRAIG HORKY

I'm a believer in
the right to not get shot by some
stupid asshole while drinking
overpriced coffee.

be one guy on duty somewhere on the ship with the keys to the small arms lockers. If something went down, the rover could open the lockers and arm the crew. Like *Die Hard* in the Navy. This was a great plan except the most dangerous man on the boat was usually the rover, because the Gunner's Mates were some of the most fucked up people I met while I was in the Navy.

There was one sailor, I'll call him Pierre, who was a meth addict and was married to a stripper who was also a meth addict. He loved heavy metal and had been raised a Mormon. When he went to his boss to tell him he was feeling suicidal, his boss sold him more meth. That's the kind of person who was running around the ship in the middle of the night with a sidearm and access to all the guns.

Still, I'm convinced that if I sat down with my survivalist friends and meth addict shipmate and told them that bringing an armed posse into the local Starbucks wasn't going to go down so well in a community that was mourning the loss of twenty-six innocents, I'm pretty sure they'd agree with me. In fact, I'm positive of it.

You have to be willfully stupid and aggressively hateful to go through with a plan so thoughtless and self-serving, and if your hatefulness and stupidity are that severe, you don't deserve access to guns. Period. What's more, your enmity has made an enemy out of me. Fuck your so-called rights. I will come down on the side of public safety every time. I'm a believer in the right to not get shot by some stupid asshole while drinking overpriced coffee.

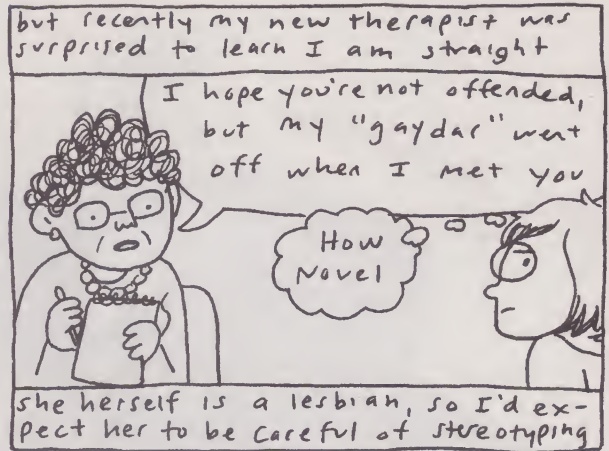
The baristas in Newtown made a bold move. On August 9, 2013, they closed the store early, well in advance of the Starbucks Appreciation festivities. The teenagers and college students and store partners making a hair above minimum wage displayed great courage and common sense. They avoided the whole mess and shut the store down.

That's what prompted Howard Shultz's letter to the American people. He did this knowing that the NRA would spin it as Starbucks's "war on gun rights." He did this knowing it would cost both his company and his store partners a considerable amount of money. He did this because it was the right thing to do.

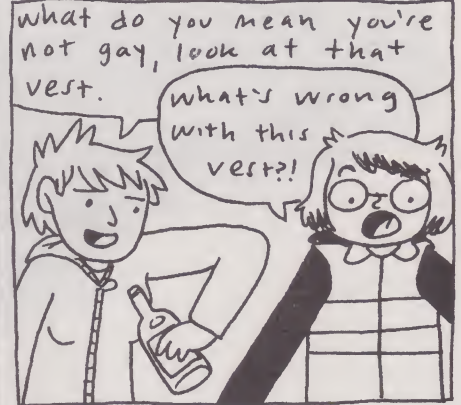
—Jim Ruland



This has always been my style



IT'S A REACTION I'VE GOTTEN ALL MY LIFE





Shanty Cheryl's Photo Page

The Flytraps at The Redwood, Los Angeles

MY SIXTY-FIRST COLUMN FOR RAZORCAKE BY BEN SNAKEPIT

I USED TO PLAY DRUMS IN A BAND.



WHEN OUR LAST SHOW WAS FINISHED, I GOT UP AND WALKED AWAY. I NEVER SAW MY DRUM SET AGAIN, AND I DIDN'T CARE.



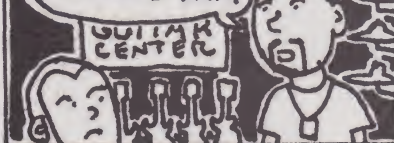
THAT'S BECAUSE

DRUMMIN' SUCKS!



FIRST, DRUMS COST EXPONENTIALLY WAY MORE THAN A GUITAR, BASS, KEYBOARD OR HORN.

HEY BRO, LOOKIN' FOR SOME DRUMS? OUR CHEAPEST KIT IS \$500. IT DOESN'T COME WITH CYMBALS OR STANDS OR A SEAT OR STICKS.



IT'S REALLY DIFFICULT TO FIND A PLACE TO PRACTICE.

HEY I NEED ABOUT SIX SQUARE FEET WHERE I CAN BE REALLY LOUD FOR AN HOUR A DAY.

YOU CAN RENT A PRACTICE ROOM FOR \$300 A MONTH.



THEY TAKE A REALLY LONG TIME TO SET UP AND TAKE DOWN.

HURRY UP! WE HAVE TO START PLAYING!

HANG ON THIS SPRING CAME OFF!



THERE'S ALL KINDS OF LITTLE PIECES THAT CAN GET LOST OR BROKEN.

ON A TEN-DAY TOUR, I LOST A KICK PEDAL, A SNARE STAND, A CYMBAL STAND, A CYMBAL, A SEAT, AND A BUNCH OF STICKS.



WHEN YOU MESS UP A PART OF A SONG, IT'S REALLY OBVIOUS AND EVERYONE NOTICES.



IT'S VERY PHYSICAL HARD WORK. IF YOU DON'T DO IT EVERY DAY IT GETS EVEN HARDER.

PLAYING DRUMS IS LIKE RIDING A BIKE UP A HILL FOR 30 MINUTES WHILE A ROOM FULL OF PEOPLE WATCH AND JUDGE YOU.



YOU'RE THE HARDEST-WORKING MEMBER OF THE BAND, BUT GET THE LEAST RESPECT OR CREDIT.

I LOVE THAT SONG WHERE YOU GO "BABY BABY" LIKE A HUNDRED TIMES.

THANKS!



...AND YOU GET VERY LITTLE CREATIVE INPUT.

WHAT'S THE FASTEST WAY FOR A DRUMMER TO GET KICKED OUT OF A BAND? "HEY GUYS, LET'S PLAY ONE OF MY SONGS!"

HAW HAW!



BUT ON THE UPSIDE, IT IS KINDA FUN.



MY BEST FRIEND BEN SNAKEPIT WROTE A COMIC IN THE LAST RAZORCAKE OUTING ME AS A GUY WHO HATES BAD MOVIES.

AND, YEAH, THAT'S A FAIR ASSESSMENT. I HATE BAD MOVIES.

IRONY JUST DOESN'T DO IT FOR ME.

HOWEVER! AS BOMB THE MUSIC INDUSTRY SAID: "THE SHIT THAT YOU HATE DON'T MAKE YOU SPECIAL!"

AND SO I REFUSE TO BE DEFINED SOLELY ON MY INABILITY TO ENJOY GARBAGE!

SO HERE'S A COMIC ABOUT SOMETHING I DO LIKE: READING!

YOU GUYS REMEMBER READING, RIGHT?

FROM BEFORE SMARTPHONES?

SO, IN TRIBUTE TO BEN'S LIST-STYLE RAZORCAKE COMICS, HERE'S:

MITCH CLEM'S TOP 5 FAVORITE HORROR NOVELS

WATERCOLORS BY NATION OF AMANDA

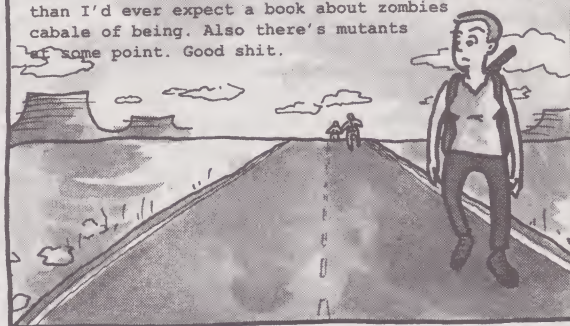
5. THE HELLBOUND HEART BY CLIVE BARKER

This is the novella Hellraiser was based on. Hellraiser is one of my favorite horror movies, and actually plays very close to the source material. But, of course, the imagination creates far scarier fare than any movie is capable of, and so this book still stands strong on its own.



4. THE REAPERS ARE THE ANGELS BY ALDEN BELL

I'm not generally into zombies, but this book is beautiful. Written in a poetic, southern-gothic prose (a la Faulkner, etc), it winds up far greater than I'd ever expect a book about zombies cabale of being. Also there's mutants at some point. Good shit.



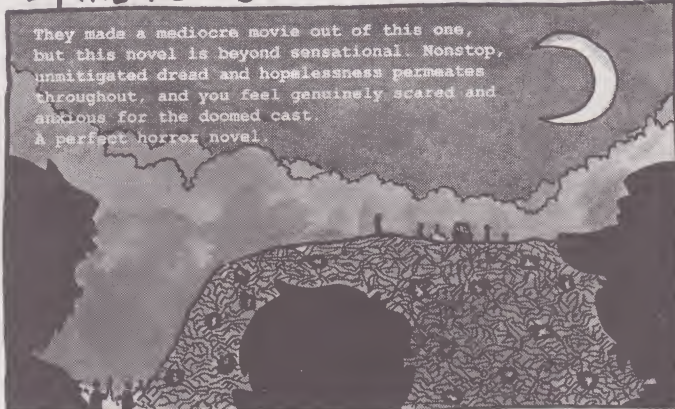
3. HEART SHAPED BOX BY JOE HILL

Hill found a brilliant way to one-up the oft-tired ghost story formula: Make the ghost a manipulative hypnotist who, even in the afterlife, is capable of hypnotizing people into harming themselves and others. He creates a legit threat out of a non-corporeal foe and the action just builds and builds from there.



2. THE RUINS BY SCOTT SMITH

They made a mediocre movie out of this one, but this novel is beyond sensational. Nonstop, unmitigated dread and hopelessness permeates throughout, and you feel genuinely scared and anxious for the doomed cast. A perfect horror novel.



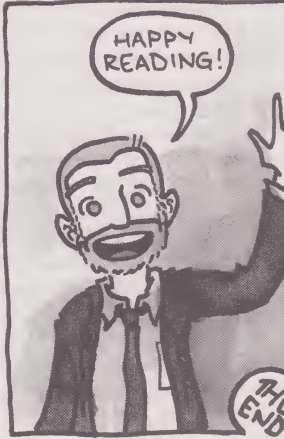
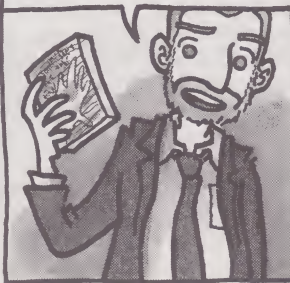
1. HOUSE OF LEAVES BY MARK Z. DANIELEWSKI

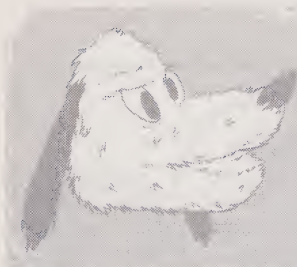
This is a real mindfuck of a book, a novel within an essay, hundreds of footnotes spiraling through one another as endlessly as the maze of black hallways the protagonists find growing beneath their rural home.

A unique story told in a unique way, and definitely leaves an impression worthy of its nearly 1,000-page length.



HONORABLE MENTION TO ONE OF THE WORST I'VE EVER READ, JOHN DIES AT THE END BY DAVID WONG, WHICH WAS SO STUPID I COULDN'T EVEN FINISH IT, AND WHICH BEN LOVES.





HERE COMES SUCCESS!

CASSIE J SNEIDER

"This was also a conscious decision to make myself look like an unfuckable nutjob."

Everything's Wrong If My Hair Is Wrong

I knew I was making a mistake when I put the clippers to my scalp. It's like the moment you lock yourself out of the house or trip over the power cord to a laptop. I felt the tingle of a bad decision in my gut the way people in commercials feel a cold sore coming on and zap it away with ointment, only I was so used to making horrible life decisions that there was no way of telling right from wrong, good from bad, conceptual haircut from the look of recent head trauma. I was living at home with my parents, working full-time at a bookstore, and going to a college close to home instead of living the life I wanted. I could sense something was amiss, but there was no way of telling if it was the haircut I was about to give myself, or the fact that I was *cutting my hair just to feel*.

The haircut had made sense in my head: it was futuristic and space-age, dyed a blue-green and buzzed at a French curve, like the swirl pattern of frozen yogurt or a glass hash pipe in a display case on St. Mark's. By cutting my brown chin-length hair so drastically, I was making a statement. That statement would be "Don't fuck with me," but I only got that half-right. It also said, "Don't fuck me. I am insane," and when the last chunks of hair fell to the bathroom floor, I realized that I had done something I could not take back.

"Whoa," I said, touching the peachiness of the right hemisphere of my head. "I think I just fucked up."

That was the first time I was able to say those words out loud. Sure, I had fucked up many times before. An example of this would be driving home on a flat tire with flames shooting up from the rim. I ended up charring the driver's side of my car and damaging the axle just because I didn't know how to change a tire. That was a mistake. Dating someone who had gotten a rare skin infection from showering only every two weeks, like a fifteenth century explorer. That was also a mistake. Having a party when my parents went out of town and inviting a stranger from Friendster, who showed up with a van full of other strangers and wouldn't leave until the sun came up. Those were all classic Cassie mistakes, hilarious bloopers to be shown during a highlight reel of fuck-ups played at my funeral. This, however, was a turning point for me. Acknowledging this mistake aloud made it very real. Not only that, but this was also a conscious decision to make myself look like an unfuckable nutjob. For someone

with what was, at best, mediocre self-esteem, this was like one of those reality shows where someone who is afraid of spiders is made to hold a tarantula by a psychotherapist in an earth-toned sweater. And it was going to be a while before hair grew back over the swirl-pattern on what I now knew was my slightly misshapen head.

"Holy shit. I look *crazy*."

I took one last look in the mirror and swept the hair from the bathroom floor. Then I went upstairs to my parents' living room and went on the internet, numbing myself with the online profiles of friends, ex-boyfriends, and friends of friends in a slow-moving circle of twenty-two-year-old anxiety. I could see that my ex was online. He was the infrequent bather, whom I had described to my friends as looking, "like Jack Black, but with a chromosome disorder." Most of my exes could be described as looking like celebrities, but with some sort of disfiguring caveat.

"Like Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Kindergarten Cop*, but with tiny eyes."

"Like Danny from the New Kids on the Block, but bald."

"Like Ziggy, but really into ska."

I scratched where the buzzers had clipped me to the scalp, baffled as to why attractive, normal-looking men were not banging down my door, begging to get with me. Then I got an instant message from Evan, who I had gone on a bike ride and made out with a few days before. Evan worked with one of my friends at a local news station. He was attractive, but in a visibly-defined pectoral, no obvious facial-tics sort of way. He dressed in polo shirts, clean, unwrinkled pants, and did not smell like a hospital sheet hamper in the IBS ward. In other words, way out of my league. He asked what I was up to and I said nothing. A few minutes later, I hopped in my car to hang out with him.

Evan didn't flinch or scream at my new haircut, as any person in their right mind would have done. He didn't even mention it, which was almost stranger. When I pulled up to his house, he was waiting near the curb in mesh workout shorts and a tank top, sculpted chest muscles glowing under the streetlight. The thing I liked about Evan was that he was secretly weird. He didn't wear Hawaiian shirts or dye his hair purple or have a tattoo of a monkey spreading open his buttocks over his bellybutton, which I had actually seen on two separate dudes. Yet, he was still somehow funny and interesting.

I followed him up a set of wooden stairs to his room on the top floor of his parents' house. I also had the attic room of my parents' house, and as a twenty-two-year-old, any similarity between me and whoever I had a crush on was inflated to celestial destiny status. In my early twenties, I dated someone for a year because we had the same birthday, ignoring a raging case of Asperger's because both of our driver's licenses said December thirteenth. Evan, with his attic room, obviously shared the same Anne Frank persecution complex and anxiety at being on the ground floor of any suburban home. Soulmate material.

When we got to the top of the stairs, Evan let us in. His room was disarmingly free of clutter. He had a bed, a dresser, and some camera equipment, but that was pretty much it.

"Where's all of your stuff?"

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"Like, photos and papers and tapes?"

I said, looking around at the spare surroundings.

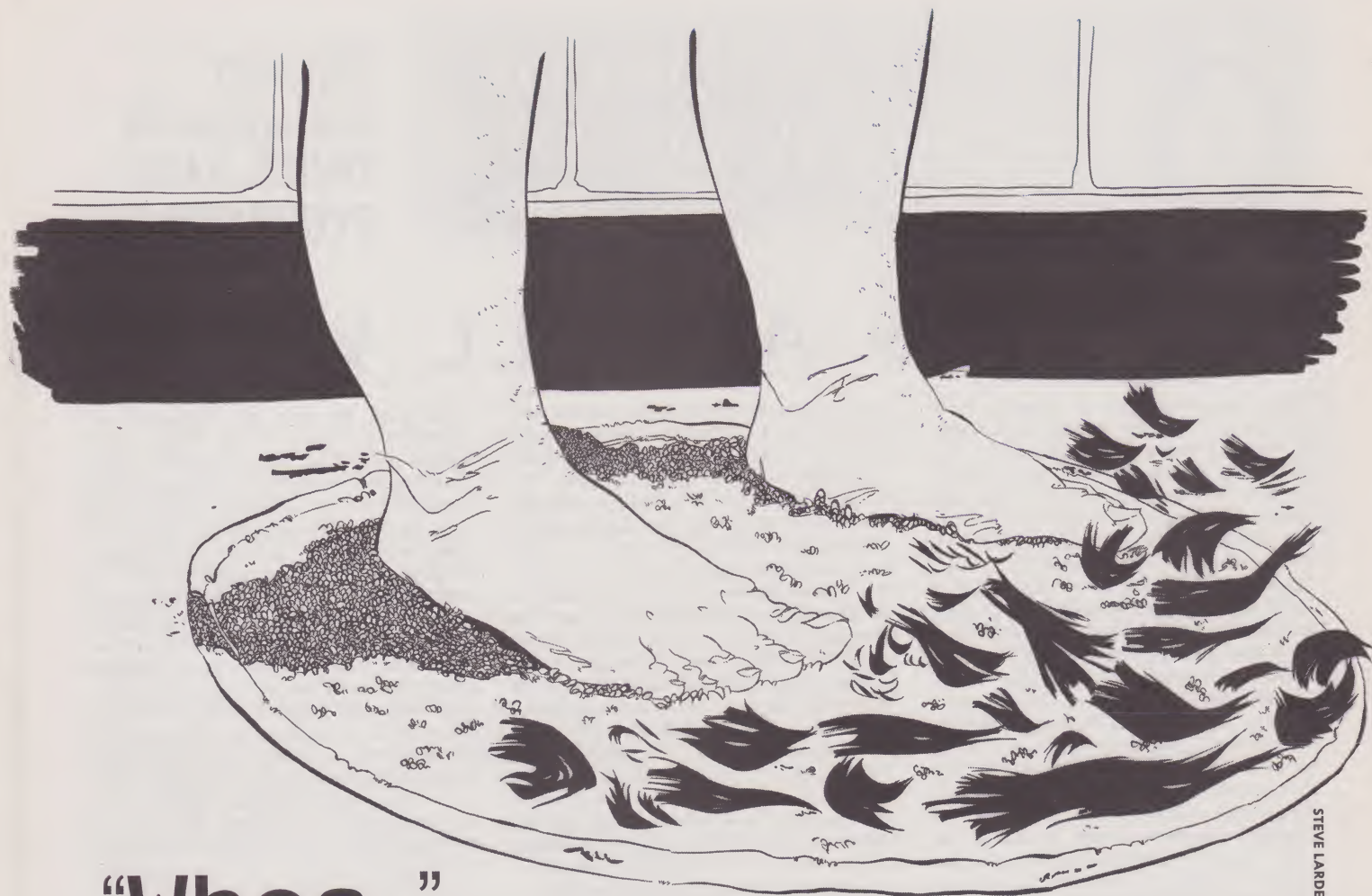
"Oh," he said. "All that stuff is downstairs. Wanna go see it?"

"Sure," I said. I considered myself an archeologist of sorts, able to sift through a dude's stuff and glean what I needed to know. Were posters framed or taped? Were the walls painted or sharpied? Was he holding a beer in every photo? Did his furniture look like it was stolen from the garbage behind a Rent-A-Center?

I followed Evan back down the stairs to the front door of his parents' house. He fumbled with a set of keys and unlocked the front door, revealing a living room that looked like a storage locker about to be auctioned off in an industrial park. I followed him through the mess I guessed was once a living room to a dining room, where the table was covered in layers of papers, like a child's science project on composting. He opened a drawer of a side table and pulled out a few envelopes of pictures. In the first one, he was a few years younger, but just as handsome and unassuming. He pointed out some people and places, a parking lot, a show in a VFW hall, and one of him kissing a pale girl with pink hair, a small, frail body, and the pinched features of someone who had been crushed in an inhospitable womb. She looked like Dobby in the Harry Potter movie.

"Who's that?" I asked, half disturbed, half fascinated.

"That's Jessica. My ex-girlfriend." He casually flipped through more photos and



STEVE LARDER

“Whoa ,”

I said, touching the peachiness of the right hemisphere of my head.

“I think I just fucked up.”

dug another envelope from the overflowing drawer. In these, he was slightly older. Group shots of people at a diner, a family vacation, Evan standing next to a girl who looked like pituitary giant Sandy Allen. In the next photo, they were engaged in the ugliest kiss I had ever seen.

“Who’s *that*?” I asked, alarmed by the unmasked disgust in my own voice.

He looked at the photo and said with a distance in his voice that almost sounded like longing, “Sarah.”

“You *dated* her?” I looked at the photo again. Sarah looked like the body that housed Krang in Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: bulky, hairless, and vacant.

“I *loved* her,” he said, wistful. I had a hard time paying attention to the rest of the photos, which were mostly he and the gargantuan Sarah opening gifts at Christmas, building a sandcastle on the beach, and participating in more public displays of affection. My body

flooded with a light, disconnected numbness, like a balloon floating away from a child’s birthday party. Something wasn’t right. It didn’t make sense for someone as classically beautiful as Evan to date a succession of weirdos. Not just weirdos, but uggos. It could really only mean one thing: I was part of the pattern. I was the last hideous puzzle-piece in the mosaic of disgusting, freaky-looking women Evan dated.

My brain swelled with insecurity, like bee stings. I itched the Carvel swirl of my newly shaved head and tried to look calm.

“Do you want a glass of water?” he asked, walking toward the kitchen.

“Sure,” I called out, trying to seem casual and collected. I thought hard and came up with a question, one that would either allay my worst suspicions or totally shatter my confidence. “Um, so Evan, why are you into me?”

This question is a trap. *Because you are*

beautiful. Because I fell in love with you the second I met you. Because you are my reason for being. There are a few right answers, but make no mistake about it, this question is a trap. But there was no way I could have been prepared for the truth.

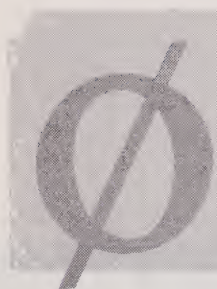
I heard the sound of a faucet turning on, a glass filling with tap water, and then the answer.

“Well, your personality outshines, you know, the rest of that stuff...”

He trailed off, leaving me to imagine which stuff he was referring to. It could have been any number of perceived deformities, or my new *Fifth Element* haircut, or maybe that I had the self-esteem of a Mennonite receptionist in a Beverly Hills plastic surgeon’s office.

I never stuck around to find out.

—Cassie J. Snider



AMERICAN GRILLED CHEESE REVIEW REV. NORB

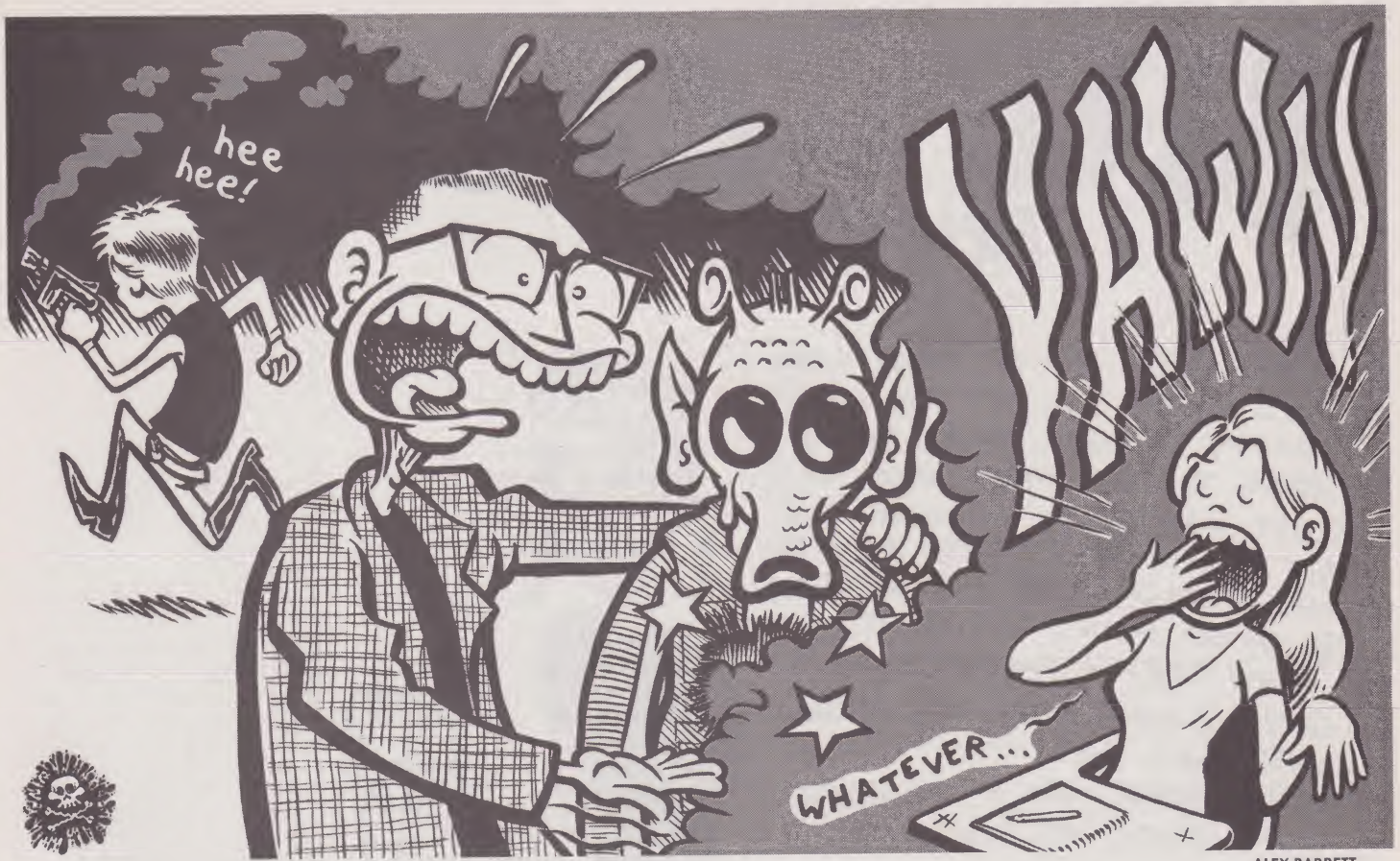
**"My only
real gripe IS
THOSE DAMN
STUDENTS."**

THE KIDS ARE ALL WRONG

I have no training as an educator. None whatsoever. I have no teaching certification, no master's degree, no experience as a TA, no fucking clue at all how to teach. That's probably for the best: I discovered, quite rapidly, I don't really like teaching. I go up in front of a class for eighty minutes and BLAH BLAH BLAH RAMBLE RAMBLE RAMBLE RAMBLE POWERPOINT POWERPOINT POWERPOINT POWERPOINT and even I think it's quite tedious. Of course, the tedium of my presentation is likely not helped by the fact that I teach thrill-a-minute courses like "Information, Computers and Society," which has got all the appeal of the court-ordered classes one takes in order to get their license back following a DWI. For the most part, it's a nice gig: I have an office, my hi-tech classroom has all manner of push-button controls ((from my desk, I can control the lights, the projector, and play the *Bongola!* album by Preston Epps before, after—and, when the class is really pissing me off, *during*—my lectures. *Huzzah for Daffy Duck and the Acme Future-Antic Push-Button Home of Tomorrow Household Appliance Company, Inc™*)), and there's a waterfall in the courtyard outside. The digs are posh, the money ain't bad, and many of my co-workers are reasonably attractive. My only real gripe IS THOSE DAMN STUDENTS. On the first week of class, during a demonstration of the lack of security afforded personal information in the digital age, I performed a web search on my name, to see how far I could get before I found something listed that I didn't want to be public knowledge. Seventeen items in, I found my name, address, and home phone number on some sales website. "What the hell?" I yell, acting more indignant than I actually am. "I don't want this information turning up on a web search, do I?" Silence. "What should I do? Should I just be cool with it?" More silence. "Should I make them take it down?" Yet more silence. "Can I even really be pissed about this? After all, this information is in the phone book, it's public knowledge. Is it different to have this information in a phone book than it is to have it online?" The silence continues. "What would *you* do?" Apparently, nothing. I try to shake some action by switching gears: "It's not like privacy concerns like these are a new thing, right? I mean, remember that scene in *The Jerk* with Steve Martin, where Naven R. Johnson gets his

name in the new phone book, and the next thing you see is some psycho gun nut picking his name out of the phone book at random for his next victim?" I pause for effect. "HE HATES THESE CANS!!!" I mug, doing my best Steve-Martin-under-fire impersonation. "STAY AWAY FROM THE CANS!!!" Blank looks. Confused giggles. I stop in my tracks. Far from underscoring a discussion point by using an easily-understandable example as a base from which we all can build, I have, apparently, merely been spazzing out and waving my arms around and uttering cryptic references that my class is quite unable to decode. I stop, ashen-faced. "You guys HAVE seen *The Jerk*, right?" Blank looks. "NOT ONE OF YOU HAS SEEN *THE JERK*!?" It is unfathomable. But true. No one has any idea what I'm talking about, despite my best efforts to frame what I'm talking about in such a fashion that I'd imagine everyone would know what I'm talking about. "Christ," I mutter under my breath. "Let's move on and talk about kill switches. For purposes of our discussion, what's a 'kill switch'?" Predictably, silence. THEY HATE THESE CANS, TOO!!! I continue: "A 'kill switch' is the ability of some entity to remotely deactivate or remove files or programs on your computer. For example, a while ago, Amazon™ found out they didn't actually have the rights to sell a certain title for the Kindle®, so they remotely deleted all copies of the title off of their customers' Kindles® and issued a refund. The ironic thing was that the book in question was *1984* by George Orwell." I freeze, immediately aware of my error. "Please tell me someone in this room has read *1984* by George Orwell." Two thirty-sevenths of my class timidly raise their hands. I suppose it's better than the zero thirty-sevenths who have seen *The Jerk*. "How do you feel about someone deleting a book off of your reader-gizmo without your permission? Is that okay? Do you feel violated?" Additional utter silence. I've seen less apathetic junkies. I decide it's time for me to hit them with THE BIG ONE: "Okay, never mind *1984*. Let me rephrase the question. In the original *Star Wars* movie from 1977, in the cantina scene, who shot first: Han or Greedo?" Phrasing things in terms of *Star Wars* references always seems to be a bit of a low-hanging fruit. It's slightly pandering and it doesn't show much imagination, but, by golly, when I was teaching game design, if I

could work things so that they could be explained in terms of *Star Wars*, I was golden. *The Call to Adventure*? Luke intercepts the message from Princess Leia! *Supernatural Aid*? Obi-Wan Kenobi! *The Crossing of the First Threshold*? Mos Eisley spaceport! Dammit, for better or for worse, the kids dig *Star Wars*, and, by virtue of having taken the city bus downtown at age eleven for the 1 PM matinee the day the movie opened in town in 1977, I have a certain undeniable cachet in such matters. Phrasing things in terms of *Star Wars* never not works. It NEVER NOT WORKS. Which is why, of course, I am so staggered by the fact that, in the interceding interval since I have posed the question of who shot first, Han or Greedo, I have heard ABSOLUTELY NOTHING in response. NOW I'm pissed. My eyes are squeezed tightly shut as I stand at the front of my fancy classroom. I'm waving my arms over my head, and I'm pretty sure there are red and yellow lightning bolts coming out of my skull. "I FLATLY REFUSE TO BELIEVE NO ONE IN THIS ROOM HAS SEEN *STAR WARS*!!! WHO SHOT FIRST??? HAN OR GREEDO???" A timid voice from the back of the room pipes up with a weak "Han?" Now I am ranting, utterly out of control: "YES!!! WHEN MY BROTHER AND I TOOK THE BUS DOWNTOWN TO SEE *STAR WARS* AT THE VIC THEATRE THE DAY IT OPENED, HAN SHOT FIRST! GREEDO DIDN'T SHOOT AT ALL! HE WAS TOO BUSY DYING! THAT'S WHY WE LOVED HAN SOLO!!! HE WAS A BASTARD!!! HE SHOT THE OTHER GUY UNDER THE TABLE, WHEN HE WAS PRETENDING TO NEGOTIATE!!!" I pause for effect, calming myself somewhat. "Then, when they re-released those movies on DVD in the '90s, George Lucas, in his infinite brilliance, 'fixed' things so that Greedo shot first, Han ducked, then Han shot Greedo. Which SUCKS! How would you feel if someone went into your gizmo by remote control, and replaced your version of *Star Wars* where Han shot first with the updated version where Greedo shoots first?" This is my big payoff, my magnum opus, my hands-across-the-aisle to the younger generation. I have appealed to ancestral instincts wedged deep within their reptilian forebrains: The primal, feral, guttural urge to have Han shoot first. To bring up such a topic when I was teaching game design at the tech school would have been to provoke a twenty



ALEX BARRETT

Nowadays, people have such easy access to content—to music, movies, whatever—they don't give a fuck about ANY of it.

minute period of wildly screamed obscenities, of oaths and death threats, of profanities vented and characters defamed. I would have invited a pointless melee of screaming, yelling, and swearing. To my shock, horror, and revulsion, I have invited no such thing: The class remains as silent and apathetic as they have ever been. "NOBODY CARES IF SOMEBODY SWITCHES OUT YOUR VERSION OF *STAR WARS* FOR ONE WHERE GREEDO SHOTS FIRST??? OR REPLACES YOUR ORIGINAL *EMPIRE STRIKES BACK* WITH ONE WHERE YOU ACTUALLY SEE THE CHEEZY WAMPA??? OR STICK YOU WITH AN UPDATED VERSION OF *RETURN OF THE JEDI* WITH HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN'S GHOST AT THE END??? THAT DOPE PROBABLY WASN'T EVEN BORN WHEN THAT MOVIE WAS FILMED!!!" Still. Utter. Silence. They don't care. They don't care about fucking *anything*. THEY DON'T EVEN CARE ABOUT *STAR WARS*!!! Utterly demoralized, I go back to finding embarrassing tidbits about myself online, which at least seemed to hold their attention somewhat. Under the auspices of

explaining "The Right to Be Forgotten," I click a link on page five of my search results, which takes me to an archived *New York Times* story from July, 1989, detailing how two student DJs at UWGB's former student radio station, WGBW—one of whom happened to be me—protested the fact that the station manager SOLD OUR STATION to Wisconsin Public Radio behind everyone's backs. We swore on the air, we said every filthy thing of which we could think, we read off a litany of rude things we wanted to do to the Chancellor's wife. We yelled and screamed and stamped our feet and knocked out ceiling tiles and hurled half-full beer cans up into the holes because we thought one day they might fall out at funny times and threw a fucking fit until the guys with the guns and walkie-talkies came and made us leave and shut down the station—whereupon, according to the *Times*, we grabbed the mic and yelled "Well, the fascists are here!" before ending our broadcast with another obscenity. We did this because WE GAVE A FUCK. We gave a fuck about the station, we gave a fuck about our radio shows, we gave a fuck about whether or not

our listeners got to hear punk rock on the radio. When people came to take away our shit, they didn't get it without a fight. Nowadays, people have such easy access to content—to music, movies, whatever—they don't give a fuck about ANY of it. *Somebody got rid of your favorite punk station? Listen to a different one. Somebody took down your favorite talking cat video on YouTube? Go watch a farting dog video instead. Someone deleted your copy of Star Wars where Han blasts Greedo under the table like the bastard he is? Watch the one where Han shoots second. Utterly demoralized, I bring up the fact that the Encyclopedia Britannica stopped printing physical copies in 2012. What happens if someone—a government, a malicious entity—goes into all the digital copies and surreptitiously alters their contents? A hand goes up in the back of the room; light in the darkness of insanity. "You, sir!" "Then we can just torrent the right encyclopedias from Sweden."*

I weep for humanity.

Love,



RAZORCAKE 17

Bite the Cactus

BY
ADRIAN
CHI

"FRIENDS"

IT HAD BEEN ONE OF THOSE LONG DAYS WHERE YOU SEE TOO MANY CRAPPY THINGS... PEOPLE BEING JERKS TO EACH OTHER, ROAD-RAGE... I JUST WANTED TO GO HOME AND SIT ON MY PORCH WITH MY DUDE, AND A COLD BEER, AND NOT HAVE TO THINK ABOUT ANY OF IT.

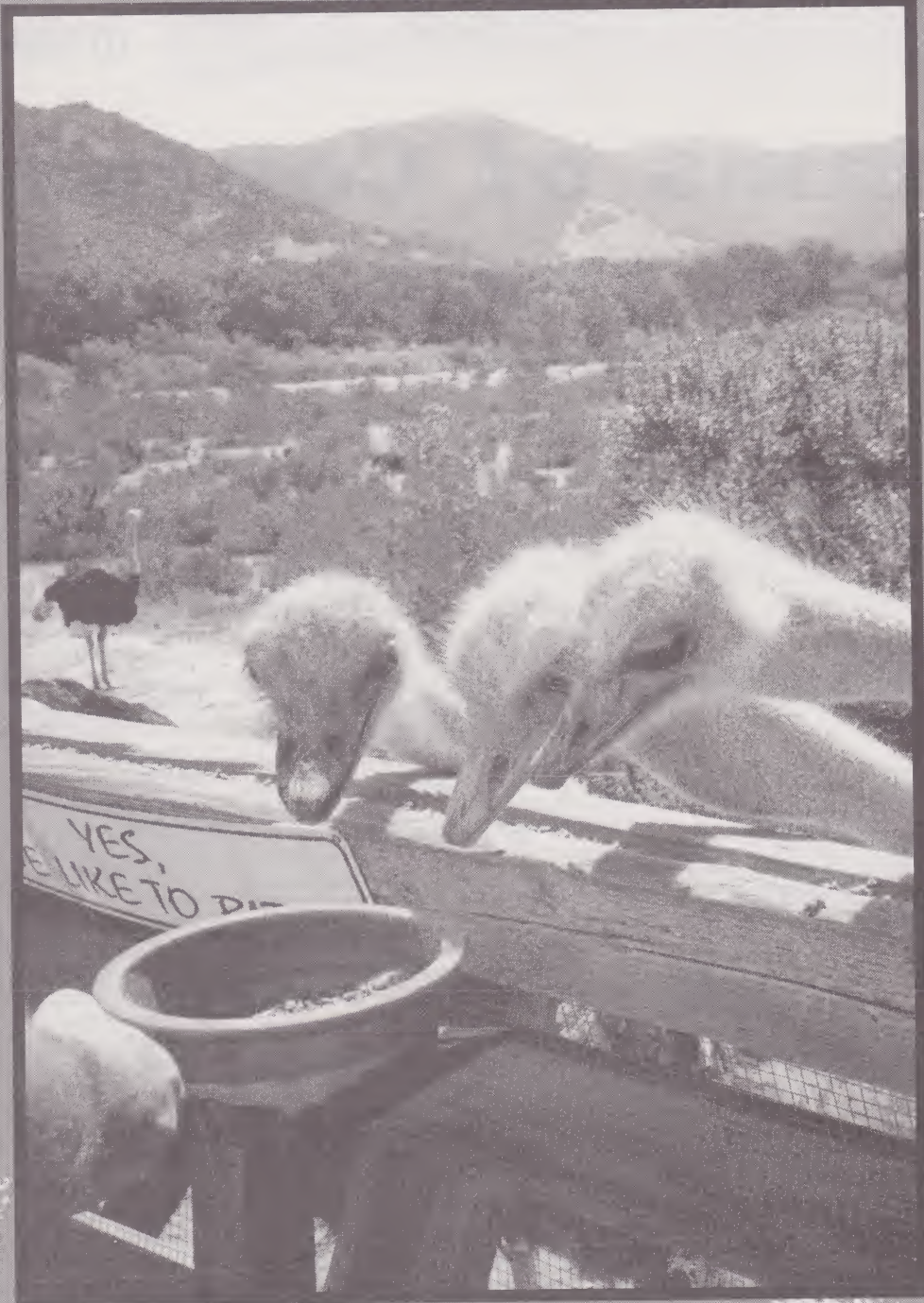
AND THEN - THESE TWO GUYS CAME DOWN MY STREET JUST LIKE THIS. →
AND IT MADE ME REMEMBER THAT THERE IS KINDNESS.

THERE'S
TONS
OF IT.

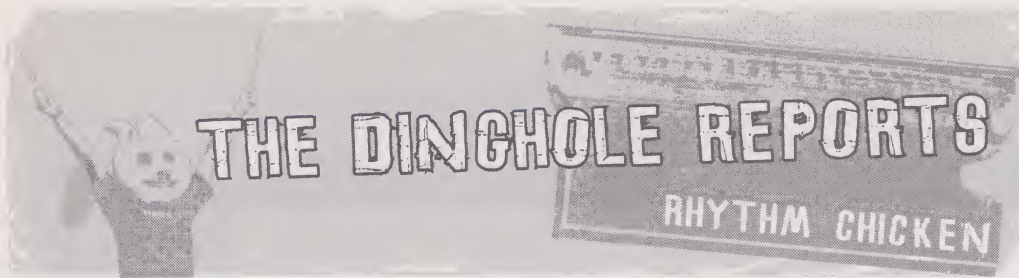
I LIKED THESE
GUYS,
AND
I LIKE TO
REMEMBER
THIS.



"LOVE THE ONES THAT YOU LOVE" - WRECK OF THE ZEPHYR



Dan Monick's Photo Page
Solvang, CA 2013



“One very young, well-dressed boy...”

Hamms of Confusion

Well, it was a cold, rainy summer up here, which most people really disliked... BUT I LOVED IT! You see, I sell hot soup, and it's hard to move the hot, steamy chowder when it's ninety-five and muggy out. All my friends and neighbors up here whined about not having enough "beach days," while my cash register actually pooped out from overuse! It just *stopped*. Needless to say, my summer was busy (and now the fall is even busier). My summer was pretty much nonstop work, but I did manage to sneak some ruckus in there when I thought no one was looking. This column will touch upon all the ruckus of summer 2013, no more and no less! ALL ABOARD!!!

Dinghole Report #135: Patriotic Parade Ruckus and Campaigning for Blamms! (Rhythm Chicken sighting #658)

Another Independence Day parade in nearby Baileys Harbor. I did this parade last summer whilst being pulled by the tractor of the late great Freddy K, the Door County Polka King. There's been an interesting local development since last year's July 4 ruckus. The Door County Brewing Company started up and released their first brew to the masses. It's called the "Polka King Porter" and features an image of the King's tractor right on the label of every bottle. The most famous tractor in Door County just got FAMOUSER!

Seeing as how the DC Brewing Co. is based in Baileys Harbor, I figured they would most likely notice the King's tractor rolling through their big parade. Amongst the usual *inspirational* posters on my float (Happy Chickendependence Day, Eat at Joe's, etc.), I displayed a new poster intended directly for the brewing company! It plainly read "Brew some Blamms" (Blamms being my creative concoction of mixing Blatz and Hamms at my local watering hole). The parade was a blast. The ruckus did rock the small town and people did scream along. I have not heard of any Blamms coming out of the small town brewery yet, but I'll keep you posted! The Polka King Porter is pretty darn good, but DANG IT!, BREW SOME BLAMMS!

The next dose of ruckus was the Milwaukee parade food fight which I detailed in the last issue. I'm still finding flour-boogers in odd corners of my body, so let's move on to...

Dinghole Report #136: Ruckus after Die Kreuzen! YES, DIE KREUZEN! (Rhythm Chicken sighting #670)

You may remember from last summer how Milwaukee's Die Kreuzen played a reunion show in their hometown and I was sadly unable to attend. I usually don't get too excited about bands from twenty years ago staging half-assed reunions, but this was DIE KREUZEN. They were one of the most amazing bands from my teen years. I saw their last show just after I turned twenty-one. Twenty-some years later I missed their reunion show in Milwaukee and whined about it in these pages. Then just one year later they decided to play five more reunion gigs around the Midwest! Milwaukee, Chicago, Madison, Green Bay, and Minneapolis would all get to see Die Kreuzen one final time! I made arrangements for my soup elves to watch over the shop as my hen and I sped down to Titletown to witness rock greatness.

There were so many old GB punker-types there that I had not seen in maybe twenty years. I was overwhelmed from seeing so many people from so long ago that I ended up huddled in a corner with my beer, meekly soaking up the opening bands. Die Kreuzen hit the stage and it was like a time machine. The show was in a small club packed with a little over one hundred people. It wasn't a huge big-stage rock production. I was able to cheers beer bottles with their bassist a few times between songs. *This* is how I want to enjoy the bands I want to see. During their encore, Rev. Nørb got up on stage to join Dan their singer in belting out their cover of Cheap Trick's "He's a Whore." Danny Die Kreuzen with his loooooong dreads and black "Wisconskull" shirt next to Nørb with his freshly shaven mohawk and pink sport coat while they both sang a Cheap Trick cover. Seriously, Wisconsin almost kicks too much ass at times.

*Then after their set,
from the back of the room
There arose such a clatter,
a ruckus-like boom
The drums did get beaten,
the rhythms were drunk
The ears did get floppy,
the chickenhead just stunk
Part drummin' poultry,
part Darby Crash*

*Then just like Keith Moon,
those drums he did smash
He wrestled the kit whilst rockers did cheer
Then he lay panting in a puddle of beer
The ruckus was messy, drunken, and grand
Stupidest drummer in all of the land!*

Dinghole Report #137: Two Nights, Two Weddings, Two Chicken Gigs! (Rhythm Chicken sightings #671 and #672)

Madeline is half owner of the small, local newspaper here in Door County. They've featured much Chicken coverage over the years and even print my ramblings from time to time. I ran into Madeline while staggering around Baileys Harbor after the aforementioned parade. She asked me what it would take to get the Rhythm Chicken to play her upcoming wedding. I instantly blurted out the going rate of exactly seventeen twenty-four-ounce cans of Hamms, thinking that would confuse and bewilder my friend enough for me to slip away and grab more beer. A few months later, her fiancé Chris delivered to my soup shop exactly four hundred and eight ounces of Hamms, four hundred and eight ounces of Hormel ham patties, and a detailed card explaining Madeline's confusion concerning exactly *which* type of ham or Hamms I was referring to. Either way, payment was made.

On the night of their wedding reception, my hen and I hauled the chickenkit into the lounge of the Alpine Lodge. I had to push people away for long enough to set up an impromptu stage in the corner where I put up a poster which read "WEDDING RUCKUS!" The lounge was soon bursting with people awaiting the properly-commissioned gig. I pulled on the grey and stinky chickenhead and began pounding out my riotous chicken rock! People screamed! Children cheered! Grandparents scratched their heads! Wanting to make this a special gig, I made a shirt which said "Chris and Madeline" on the front and prepared a goodie basket forged from an emptied Blatz fifteen-pack! At the peak of the evening's sloppy performance, I halted the ruckus, rose up, and began emptying the goodie basket onto the cheering crowd. Candy, candy, and more candy filled the air! Children gathered around feverishly to procure the sugared booty! I rocked out a few more dumpy doses of ruckus rock and



JACKIE RUSTED

...was seen carrying around an empty Blatz 15-pack later that evening.

His mother was proudly bragging that her son got the Blatz box. Only in Wisconsin.

then dove face-first onto the chickenkit and thrashed it about. The room erupted with deafening cheers as I impishly hippity-hopped out the side door. One very young, well-dressed boy was seen carrying around an empty Blatz 15-pack later that evening. His mother was proudly bragging that *her* son got the Blatz box. Only in Wisconsin.

The very next night was the wedding reception for my friends Zack and Melissa. Many people were at both weddings. Many did not expect such a rare double-whammy of ruckus to occur, and nobody really mentioned the possibility. Zack and Mel's reception had an endless supply of Polka King Porter on tap, which was enough substitute payment for an unrequested gig!

I already had the drums in the car from the previous night and already pre-made a shirt that said "Zack and Mel" on the front. Zack caught wind of my hen and me hauling the chickenkit in the back door. He instantly ran up to the band onstage and told them it was time to take a break!

A few minutes later, the crowd gathered around a rusty, broken-down drumset in the middle of the dance floor. Zack took the microphone and rattled off a circus-type introduction until the thunder began. The ruckus echoed around the party barn! The crowd, many of them very seasoned roadsitters, all hoisted their drinks high! People were yelling such niceties as "Take your clothes off!!!", "HOIST!", and

"LLLLLADIES!!!" Zack and Mel were right up front rockin' to the ruckus on their wedding night! Then the chaos reached its peak as Keith Moon once again gave way to Darby Crash, or was it GG Allin? Either way, I belly-flopped onto the kit, tore it limb from limb, and then limply hippity-hopped out the back door straight to the keg which held a constant flow of Polka King Porter all night. I looked up at the starlit sky while pulling a well-deserved beer from the tap. I like to think that the Polka King, Freddy K himself, was looking down from his throne in heaven... and drooling, 'cause in heaven there is no beer!

—Rhythm Chicken

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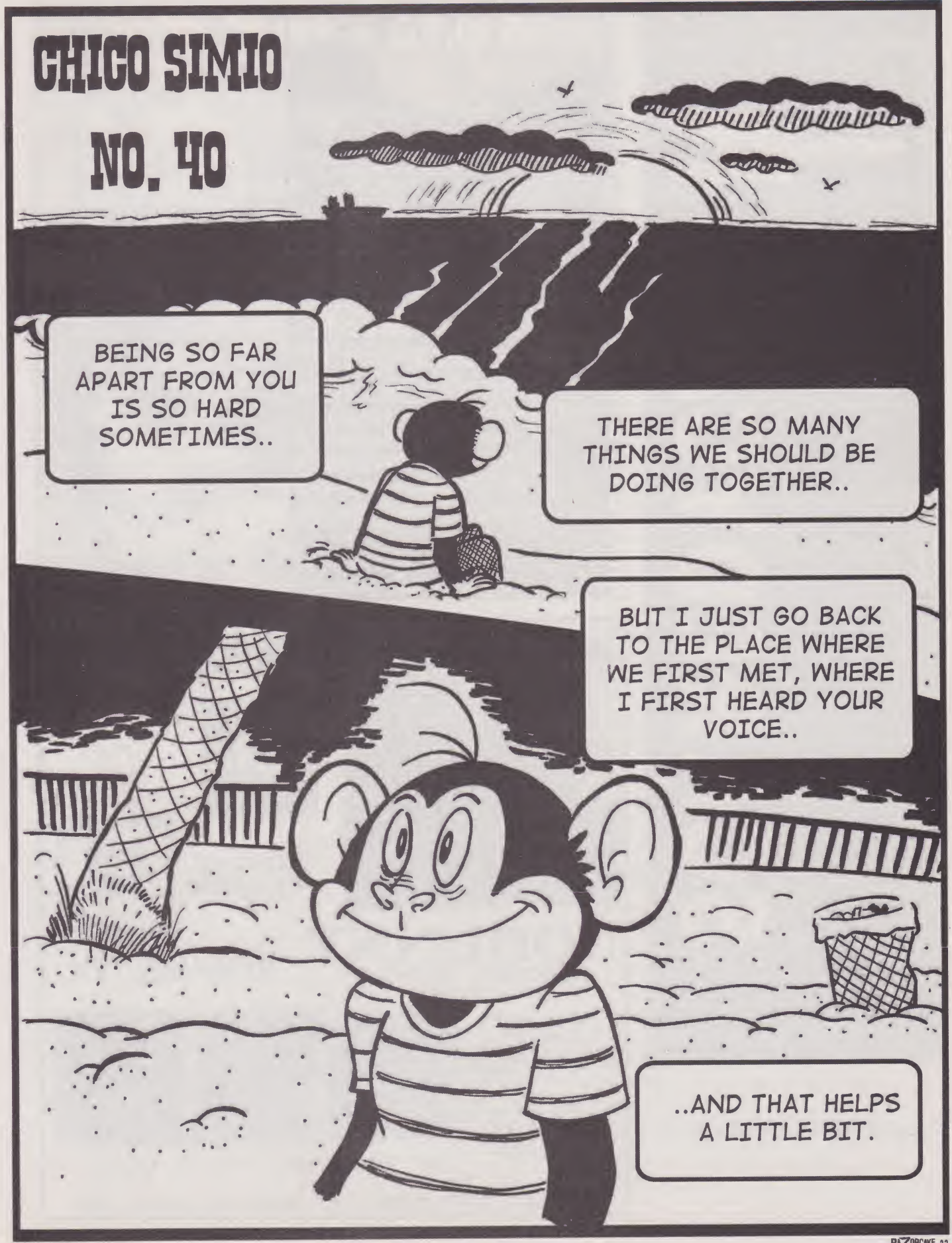
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TO THE PLACE WHERE
WE FIRST MET, WHERE
I FIRST HEARD YOUR
VOICE..

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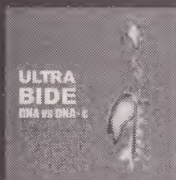


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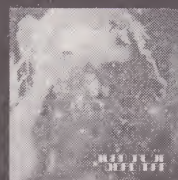
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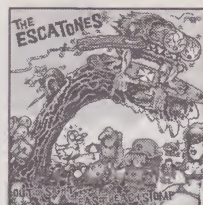
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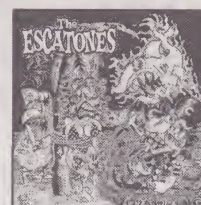
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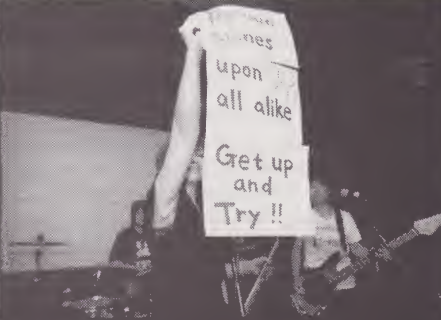
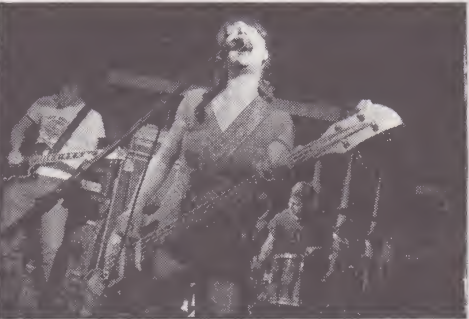
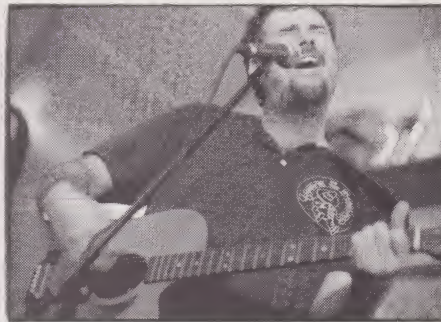
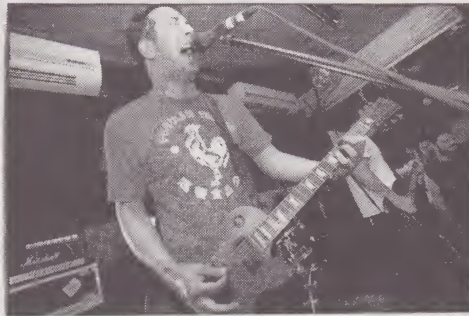
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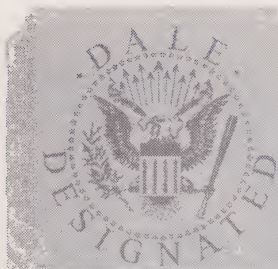


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I'M AGAINST IT

DESIGNATED DALE

"No
laughter,
no life."

Sausage Links and Soft-Serve Ice Cream

I have a pretty warped/bent/foul (meaning "good," of course) sense of humor. You might have picked up on this if you've paid any attention to the columns I've written for *Razorcake* over the past twelve-plus years. *MAD* magazine was on steady rotation for my wee peepers ever since I could learn to read sentences aloud as a big mouth kid in elementary school. I hit the jackpot when my neighbors hooked me up with a ton of back issues. I was on constant lookout after that for old issues at thrift stores and I would usually score a small handful every time I scoured through the book and magazine shelves. This was the late '70s/early '80s. It was way before the eBay bloodsuckers ruined every fan's chance at happening upon anything they might be happy to discover, so the pickings were decent (as were the mere prices!).

MAD's movie spoofs were a favorite for a large swath of its readership. One of the recurring pieces that got my giggling goat were the "Snappy Answers to Stupid Questions," written and cartooned by old-school *MAD* man Al Jaffee. He is the same dude who did all those wonderful picture "fold-ins" inside *MAD*'s back cover. What exactly are "Snappy Answers to Stupid Questions"? I won't go into specifics because you're too lazy to Google it, but it's one of the greatest smart-ass comic strips ever put to paper. A cartooned collection of Don Rickles-inspired one-liners, if you will. (If you have to look up Don Rickles, then you really need your head examined.)

One piece Jaffee did for *MAD* that I remember well was about clever inventions for getting rid of doggy doo in a public setting. More humorous than the inventions themselves was the way Jaffee used sausage links as a PC substitute in his illustrations. There was even a disclaimer at the beginning of the strip that showed a very detailed dog bearing down, about to lay pooch pipe on the ground with a black censoring bar across the offending pile. The disclaimer went on to explain that it was going to use sausage links as a more pleasing example to the eye, rather than your standard French bulldog feces. I think this explains why I laugh to this day when our own Art Fuentes draws poop in the form of soft serve ice cream in his comic strips.

Television also played a solid role in stoking the funny part of my brain when I was growing up. There were three shows at the time broadcasting in syndication that made me chortle: *All in the Family*, *Good Times*, and *Sanford and Son*. They might've been a tad heavy, issue-wise, but I was glued to these series because of the laughter each one brought. Seriously, I love each one to this day. The series actually started to take a look at how to not be an asshole—much the same way my mother and father raised me—by making smart and conscientious decisions (and they did in spades!). Unfortunately, there hasn't been much on television lately that is as issue-provoking as those three shows. The exception would be *Chappelle's Show*, which is still sorely missed (and needed!). Don't get the wrong idea, there are some pretty good sitcoms on television, but nothing near the caliber of past series that made you laugh as much as they made you think.

Comedy movies were few and far between at the movie houses for yours truly, that is until the VHS bug descended upon our house in the early '80s and I rented every funny (and awful horror B-movie) I could get my hands on. My father was a pretty darned good gauge for the truly guffaw-ish type of funny movies. These included *Kentucky Fried Movie* and *The Boob Tube*, which he recommended right away because he saw them in theaters several years earlier. Both are tame by today's standards (depending on who you talk to). They're both skit-oriented films that still rile up the snickering every time I bust 'em out. I think the very first funny movie I actually went to see was *Airplane!* when I was in the fifth grade. I shouldn't have to explain where that resides in comedy movie history. Besides 1978's *Animal House* (a classic and whole other column in its own right), there were some pretty damn good comedies in the early/mid '80s. The list includes *Caddyshack*, *Easy Money*, and *Back to School* along with *Weird Science* and the fistfuls of other John Hughes gems he released during that decade—homeboy knew funny! Speaking of *Weird Science*, I will forever defiantly stand by my word that Bill Paxton playing the as older, pain-in-the-ass brother Chet Donnelly, will be his be-all, end-all cinematic performance.

(Yes, even more so than his freaked-out self as Private Hudson in *Aliens*, but he still gets points as the leader of the punkers in *The Terminator*.) I mean, c'mon. Try to look me straight in the eye and tell me that any one of Chet's one-liners isn't funny.

As clever and imaginative as some of the lyrics were to the rock'n'roll I was getting into in my early days, nothing cut straight to the funny bone as the lyrics from some of the punk rock bands that I got into heavily years later. The Dickies without a doubt are high up there when it comes to eliciting laughs—just as much as they rocked it out in the recording studio or onstage. The Dickies—like their tongue-in-cheek partners in crime, the Dead Kennedys—aren't as political as they are straight-up goofs, with the intelligence and talent behind their wacky, frantic wall of silliness, dialed in to drive all the jokes home. The next time some asshole starts going on about how "funny" the "prop comedian" Carrot Top is, just stick a finger in their face and calmly say, "No. Leonard Graves Phillips" and walk away. Some fans and/or people might say that the jokes or stage antics of The Dickies need to be updated, with the band always keeping with the times. I don't get people who say this. Their trusted rubber dog mask, gorilla mask, hunchback headgear, occasional inflatable doll, or the many versions of the ever-lovable Stuart, the phallic hand puppet that has entertained generations time and time again? Those tools of the trade aren't going anywhere. Hell, I don't want them to go anywhere. It'd be the equivalent of removing the part of the pinhead bringing out the GABBA GABBA HEY sign and dancing around during "Pinhead," back when the Ramones were still together doing their thing. Not. Going. To. HAPPEN.

I think it's healthy to have a sense of humor. Nothing lifts the human senses as much as a laugh that makes your stomach hurt to the point where you can't breathe—no matter what your particular brand of chuckling might be: good ol'-fashioned funny, filthy gutter humor, all the ranges of stand-up comics/jokes, or laughing at the expense of others. Now, hold on—I'm not saying I roar like a hyena if I watch a clip of some unknowing victim getting seriously injured, but if the dummy in

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BILL PINKEL

If the dummy in question purposely films themselves doing something of the utmost idiocy to begin with, then so be it—MAKE ME LAUGH, STUPID.

question purposely films themselves doing something of the utmost idiocy to begin with, then so be it—make me laugh, stupid. Before anyone starts wringing their hands, remarking how “bad” that is, go check your YouTube browser history first before you start throwing stones in glass houses.

How’s that old adage go? “There’s laughing with someone, and there’s laughing at someone.” Excellent words to remember, but the more apt phrase is, “If you can’t laugh at yourself, you have no business laughing at others.” I always say to the people who have a bit more of a stick up their ass than most who

comment or complain that I joke around too much: “No laughter, no life.” I’m well aware that there’s a time and place for fucking around, but to extinguish all forms of laughter purposely in one’s life? What’s the point, besides possibly having (or using the excuse) a bad case of Geliophobia? Yes, that’s an actual phobia of laughter, and I’ve yet to run into or hear anyone who has this. As sad as having this might be, they better steer clear of this house, or they’ll probably be freaked the fuck out beyond words.

Look, no one is saying that you have to walk around with some wide, shit-eating grin plastered on your mug all day, but that

also doesn’t mean you’re free to suck the joy out of everyone and everything around you. If you really find it difficult to cut loose (not break wind, you cochino/cochina!), start hanging out with more funny (alive) people, or people that you can actually talk with—you’d be surprised how easy it is to laugh with someone who gets you.

Be cool and smile, fool.
And fuck ‘em if they can’t take a joke!

—Designated Dale
designateddale@yahoo.com



DOO
DOOLA
DOOT
DOO...

DOO
DOO!

WHO ARE YOU?

"Is it true that East Bay Ray was arrested for carrying a pineapple?"

Nardwuar vs. Jello Biafra

The Human Serviette

(2013)

The first time I interviewed original Dead Kennedys screamer Jello Biafra, he ended the interview after two minutes. Not to be deterred, I tried again a couple years later. Jello scribbled all over my face with a jiffy marker before I could even utter a word. These two incidents set the tone. Year after year I approached Jello and try to do an interview. Despite an initial encounter that started off on the wrong foot, Jello eventually warmed up to my constant bugging by and granted me numerous interviews over the years. He even ended up releasing my band The Evaporators and also a DVD of my interviews on his Alternative Tentacles record label. So in case you are wondering where this is going dear Razorcake reader, here is my most recent conversation, done in Vancouver, BC, Canada, with none other than Jello Biafra!

Transcribed by Rishbha Bhagi

Nardwuar: Who are you?

Jello: Last I heard I was still Jello Biafra, even to you.

Nardwuar: Jello, welcome to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Jello: Well, thank you. I think you might be the first person who said that, even on the airplane.

Nardwuar: Actually, I've said that to you thirteen times. I've interviewed you thirteen times now since 1989.

Jello: Well, I guess somebody has to do it.

Nardwuar: And I thought to myself, "Hmm, all these interviews I've done with you, Jello, I gotta get you a gift that reminds you of thirteen: some DOA beer. [Nardwuar hands Jello a DOA beer.]

Jello: This isn't rea—oh, it *is* DOA ale. This have any connection to Joe and company, or is it totally separate?

Nardwuar: It's totally connected. Check right on there.

Jello: Product placement. I can't read small letters anymore.

Nardwuar: What do you think about that? DOA beer.

Jello: It's kind of a logical step in that direction. I don't know how that would've

affected his run for the provincial legislature. Considering who else seems to be running and ruining your country right now, I think him in the legislature would've been a breath of fresh air, a shot in the arm—maybe even a shot in the gullet if he could dose this beer and give it to all them Conservatives so they start seeing things and stuff. I've thought about trying to do a beer for years, but I haven't gotten anyone to make it for me yet. I wanna call it Jonestown Ale and Diet Purple.

Nardwuar: Ba-boom!

Jello: Okay.

Nardwuar: Jello, speaking of traveling to far away places, Jonestown etcetera, you're wearing a very nice hat, aren't you?

Jello: Oh, I'm glad you like it.

Nardwuar: And it comes from the land...

Jello: ... of Australia.

Nardwuar: The land down under. And I was curious, Jello, is it true that East Bay Ray really was arrested for carrying a pineapple?

Jello: No, I think you've put two or three stories together and let your zany mind play tricks on you. No, that was when Queensland, the northeastern province, which is kind of like—oh, excuse me, they have states down there—which is kind of like Florida, complete with resorts, environmental degradation, and, at the time, a near-dictator running it, by the name of Joh Bjelke-Petersen. The net result was when Dead Kennedys played in Brisbane in 1983, D.H. Peligro was arrested by the police for drinking while black. Basically, he and members of the band that played with us called the Johnnys were all drinking beer together outside the back entrance to Festival Hall, I think it was called, and the cops arrested him and *only* him for drinking on the sidewalk. Ray asked what was going on, so they threw him in the car, too, and charged him with interfering with a police officer. It became a tabloid press sensation the next day.

Later, at a party, I ran into somebody who was telling me what it's like to live under the repressive Banana Republican kind of life under Joh Bjelke-Petersen. They talked about how the police would break up loud parties by kicking down the door and smashing the stereo equipment with clubs and leaving. Then another guy came

up to me and said, "Oh this is worse—I got arrested for carrying a concealed weapon in a bag of groceries: a pineapple." (Pineapples grow in Queensland.)

In some ways it's still more extreme in the resort-gone-wrong area than Florida. I mean, the town of Surfer's Paradise gets dark at 4:30 in the afternoon or so because they put up so many high-rises along the beach, making it that much harder to avoid stepping on Portuguese men o' war, or wading into the water a little ways and getting stung by a stone fish, which will kill you in minutes, or a toad fish, which will kill you in a few more minutes. Further off shore, the most poisonous sea snakes in the world; further in shore, the most poisonous land snakes in the world; and, of course, let's not forget, a little bit further north—crocodiles.

Nardwuar: Jello, in Australia, you did some record hunting. I think you got a Masters Apprentices 7", didn't you?

Jello: Yeah, I was supposed to get two and forgot to take the second one with me, but hopefully it'll come my way one of these times.

Nardwuar: A legendary 1960s band. So I thought of another gift for you, Jello—I would give you the edition of *Ugly Things* from San Diego by Mike Stax that talks all about the Masters. [Nardwuar hands Jello a copy of *Ugly Things* fanzine.]

Jello: Well, we have to give it up to Mike Stax and all the work and scholarship and the enthusiasm for music he puts in. It used to be a smaller zine and look what he's doing now. This is just amazing—I'm not sure anyone in the world is going to the lengths that he does to make something like this as good as he does. So here's to you again, Mr. Stax.

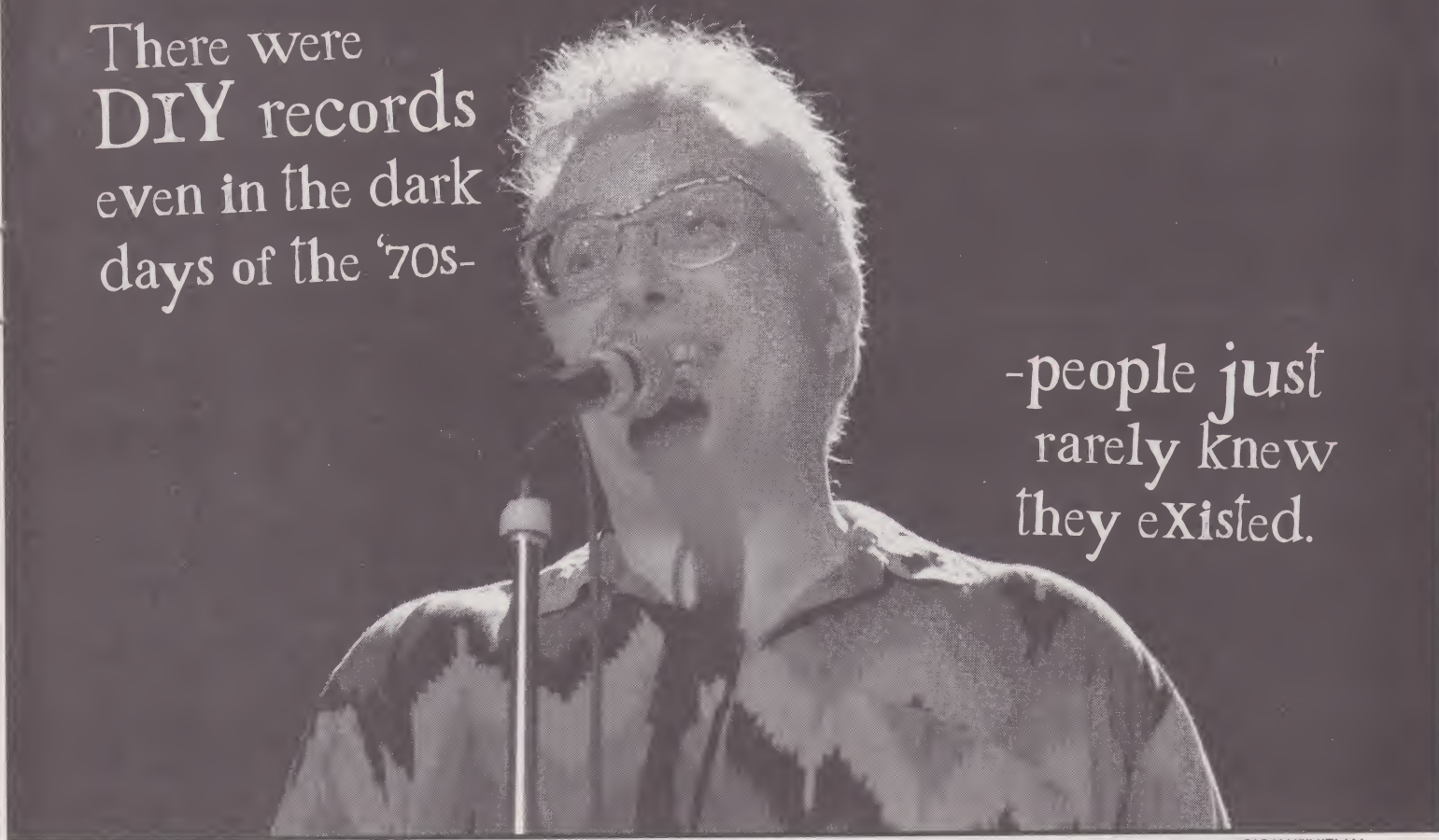
Nardwuar: It's an amazing zine filled with the entire story. Part three and part two are available somewhere else, I only gave you part one, Jello.

Jello: Oh.

Nardwuar: And speaking of stories and stuff, what can you tell me about this band right here—the Nails? [Nardwuar hands Jello a Nails 12".]

Jello: Well, that's an X-rated version, a 12" of it, no less. I guess I'm gonna pull a Snoopy Dogg and keep that, too. The Nails started out in Colorado in Boulder, where I'm from,

There were
DIY records
even in the dark
days of the '70s-



-people just
rarely knew
they existed.

SARAH WHITLAM

as the Ravers. When the Ramones came through in March of '77 or so, and all kinds of people had their life and destiny and career trajectory changed, from the Wax Trax! label to Angst the SST band? to Don Fleming—who went into Velvet Monkeys and Gumball and now works at the Lomax Archive in New York—all kinds of people were there, so the venue, which was normally a country/rock showcase, gave the Ramones a second night to headline.

They needed an opener, so the Ravers were on the bill, and suddenly they needed what was then called “roadies.” Not “guitar techs” or “drum techs” or “tour managers”—“roadies.” I was asked to be a roadie for the Ravers and suddenly I felt ten feet tall. “All you people who thought I was just dumb loser in high school, I’m a roadie for the Ravers now. Yay!” So many good times, many more cool shows, including one or two with the Nerves when they came out from L.A. Then the Ravers moved to New York, left me behind, which kinda bummed me out initially, but then I went west and the rest is history, so it all worked out. In New York, they wound up changing a few personnel and changing their name to the Nails and eventually hit pay dirt with “88 Lines About 44 Women.”

Nardwuar: And that’s an X-rated version that you’re interested in? You haven’t seen that before?

Jello: Well, I guess the one on the radio probably wasn’t X-rated, but RCA Records

putting out an X-rated version of anything kinda surprises me.

Nardwuar: Jello, is it true once for a Dead Kennedys tour, you toured in the U.K. because you hadn’t paid your rent?

Jello: That was just hype made up by some fool in a press office. That’s not true at all. My passport disappeared a day or two before I was supposed to get on the plane, and it took a while to get it back, so I arrived a couple days after I should have and one show was canceled. But they made up some dumb lie and that’s where that one came from.

Nardwuar: Jello, speaking of X-rated stuff, how hard was it to make records like this in the 1960s? *Wife Swapping*... [Nardwuar hands Jello a record.]

Jello: ... *Wife Swapping Swingers Orgy Porgy Party*. I think I have some other stuff on this label or something. Audio Stag Records, yeah. I’m guessing they were under the counter at adult bookstores, to the degree that there even were adult bookstores.

Nardwuar: If you turn it over, on the back it says, “Now you...”

Jello: “... don’t have to go to Denmark or Sweden to get this kind of album.” You probably never did, actually. I mean, you know as well as I do those bootlegs of old ’78 recordings, often early rhythm and blues, there’s whole volumes of songs about pot and there’s whole volumes of songs about sex. A lot of it was innuendo and that was what Tipper Gore and her right-wing, Christian friends wanted to drag us back

to, but then you start thinking that way—“Cool, innuendo can be everywhere”—and how those same people could say the arch Conservative majority leader in the House of Representatives’ name, Dick Armey, with a straight face is beyond me.

Nardwuar: Jello, another record that kinda had the innuendo right here, Doug Clark And The... [Nardwuar hands Jello a record.]

Jello: ...And The Hot Nuts! Yeah, they were a little more than innuendo and supposedly they still play, to this day. It’s toilet humor on the southern fraternity circuit. There’s the first one, *Nuts to You*, and every volume’s got nuts, hot nuts, “You get ‘em from the peanut man. Nuts, hot nuts, you get ‘em anywhere you can.” New set of jokes and everything.

Nardwuar: Records are very interesting, especially ones like this. What can you tell the people about records like this—*Music for Half-Assed*... [Nardwuar hands Jello a record.]

Jello: ...*Friends*. This was a whole series of gag gift album covers that didn’t have a record inside, the idea being you would hide this in your collection, somebody else is going through it, and they wonder what it is, and a good laugh is had by all. Times were so innocent back then. Supposedly.

Nardwuar: Because if you pull it open right there, there’s something inside it, right?

Jello: No.

Nardwuar: Yes there is. If you pull it open, there is the gag inside it.

Jello: I’m gonna have to look inside all of mine and see if I got any of these. Oh, there

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you go. "I bought this album for you as a gift. Sorry I couldn't afford the record."

Nardwuar: Jello, I was thinking that you have a lot of records, and I have a gift here for you. It's actually a book. I don't know—have you seen this book? This is the *Enjoy the Experience* book. [Nardwuar hands Jello a book.]

Jello: Never heard of it. Oh, Kugelberg and Paul Major were part of this, huh?

Nardwuar: And it's all about homemade records from the 1950s, right up to the '70s.

Jello: Oh, yeah. One after another that I've never seen and is not lurking in my home somewhere.

Nardwuar: What can you tell the people about homemade records? Any of these ring any bells to you if you just flip it open for a second?

Jello: I saw a few in there, but yeah—it's something that always went on, but punk brought back DIY a little bit more into the heads of people who really realized that punk was reconnecting with the spirit of rock and roll and all. But there were DIY records even in the dark days of the '70s—people just rarely knew they existed, so they're still being dug up and they still turn up in thrift stores. Now people are even combing through all those scary-looking Christian records to see if any of them are the next psychedelic gem like Search Party, or something.

Nardwuar: Jello, BJ Snowden, Ed Snowden. Snowden is in the news again!

Jello: [laughs] This is true!

Nardwuar: Are they really coming for your uncool niece right now? What's going on with this data mining?

Jello: I don't have any nieces.

Nardwuar: Ba-boom!

Jello: [laughs] Well, I mean unfortunately it's always been going on. They're vacuuming up all your data too. I found about the NSA in the '70s and even then they said, "No, it's not international. They're spying on everybody domestically and that's what the micro relay towers are for, and that's what the little green dot in your landline phone is for." Maybe true, maybe not, but this was a mainstream news magazine that claimed that and I took note. I also took note during the last backlash against secrecy and spying that got Nixon run out of town on a rail, before years later a senator named Barack Obama voted in favor of legalizing every last crime Nixon committed in order to save George W. Bush, and that helped get us where we are now. But anyway, there was such a backlash—I was in high school and those Senate Watergate Committee hearings were the best reality show in the history of television. At one point, I could do impersonations of every single senator on the panel.

But anyway, Nixon went down. There was such a backlash that they started letting kids see their school records. You were never allowed to see your files; all of a sudden you were. I looked at my file. Open it up, and there's the little school picture of child Eric all the way up to teenage monster and whatnot, all black and white high contrast, so they all

looked like mugshots. Even in first grade, the teacher wrote this evaluation of me I never knew existed, saying I was this bad seed. I was this bad, troublemaking kid, and I didn't think I was then. I liked her! I liked school in first grade. It wasn't till the next year that everything went to hell. So that was a little disconcerting. Then I thought, "You know, these records are not gonna get destroyed—they're gonna go somewhere, so somebody is always gonna have this file. I will always be on file and even if I was running around with a "God Bless Sarah Palin, The End Times Are Coming, Praise the Lord" tomorrow, I'd still be one of the first people they took away if it ever got to that point. Therefore, I'm gonna do what I was gonna do anyway.

Nardwuar: Jello, *White People and the Damage Done*.

"Cool, innuendo can be everywhere."



SARAH WHITLAM

Jello: And?

Nardwuar: And I was curious, have you seen this record right here? John Barber, *It's...*

Jello: ...*It's Tough to Be White*. [laughs] Oh my god. [Nardwuar hands Jello a record.]

Nardwuar: With liner notes by...

Jello: I can't read it.

Nardwuar: Dick Gregory.

Jello: Oh.

Nardwuar: Dick Gregory does the liner notes.

Jello: So, in other words, there's a little more to this than—this is probably *not* a white supremacist record then.

Nardwuar: No, it isn't. He's a guy from Canada going to the States, and he gets liner notes from Dick Gregory, who's a black actor/social activist.

Jello: Yeah, and if he holds on to that cigarette much longer it's gonna burn his

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thumb. Maybe that's part of the act, too. I have a couple others like this, where it's a white guy on the cover: *Old Stories in Authentic Negro Dialect*. And it's appeared all over the South at Rotary clubs and things like that. It's very twisted.

Nardwuar: Jello, it's coming up to the

and so, to me, it was kind of the end of when people thought they could make a difference, not just in their own lives, but in society and planet earth. Then they kinda gave up and turned into "me-me-me-me first" kind of people, which of course now has been taken to the extreme of the extremes by everybody

Jello: Well Gaga Goodies had asked, but we just couldn't.

Nardwuar: Jello, did you ever see GG Allin?

Jello: We gotta skip some of these questions. We are out of time.

Nardwuar: Okay, winding up here just quickly. Jello, Darby Crash—did you ever go

In first grade, the teacher wrote this evaluation of me I never knew existed, saying I was this bad seed.

fiftieth anniversary of the JFK assassination.

Jello: I suppose it is.

Nardwuar: And I was thinking, what is your favorite Kennedy song?

Jello: Dead Kennedys song or song about Kennedy, or what?

Nardwuar: All of the above.

Jello: Oh, I don't know. There's a lot of Dead Kennedys songs that are pretty cool. "Holiday in Cambodia" is the one that stands up the best because you can play it so many different ways. It's just a really cool and unique riff. "Bullet" by the Misfits; that's a great one. "Reload" by Ministry, is either about that or they used it for their video, where Al is dressed as Jackie O in the pink dress and moons the camera from the Lincoln when the big bullet comes. So there's a lot of them. There's more touching ones, like "Abraham, Martin, and John" (written by Dick Holler, first recorded by Dion) and some of that.

Nardwuar: Yeah, I guess I was curious. What did you think about the sing-a-long with JFK? [Nardwuar hands Jello a record.]

Jello: Another thing he inspired was seemingly more comedy records making fun of him than any other president in history, except maybe Tricky Dick Nixon, but for the opposite reason. People were kinda making fun of...

Nardwuar: These are his speeches set to music.

Jello: Oh and "Laugh along with Nixon," it says. There's one that I found in the thrift store that's all one-liner jokes told by John F. Kennedy. You know, John F. Kennedy as a comedian. Then there's that First Family record, parodying all of them by what's his name—Vaughn Meader, however you pronounce that—which, at the time, if I'm not mistaken, was the largest-selling LP in history at that point. It was pre-Beatlemania, obviously.

Nardwuar: I mean, you were in a band called the Dead...

Jello: ...Kennedys.

Nardwuar: Dead Kennedys. Now, how offensive was that to people? Because nowadays, it's not offensive at all, is it?

Jello: To some people it is. It's definitely value in shock value, that's for sure. That was the original attraction to the name, but then I realized it kinda needed to be justified. It did provoke people to think, including myself,

from followers of Ron Paul to followers of (Canadian Prime Minister) Stephen Harper.

Nardwuar: But don't you think it's kind of interesting how mainstream-y the JFK assassination is? Look—they have mints from the place where JFK was assassinated.

Jello: [laughs]

Nardwuar: The Texas School Book Depository has mints.

Jello: [laughs] That's still not as good as the porno videos they sold at the gift shop at the Corcovado—you know that big statue on top of the mountain above Rio de Janeiro of Jesus? Porno videos in the gift shop. That blew my mind.

Nardwuar: Jello, did you have any trouble in Dallas at all, with the Dead Kennedys playing there?

Jello: I don't think we ever did, no. I mean, not even when we played outside the Republican Convention in 1984 and all the delegates were exiting the hall and walking right back where we were. We got the whole audience to turn to all the Republicans: "Fuck off and die! Fuck off and die!" Did they hear us? You bet they did. Among the people in attendance, I think, was Joey Johnson, who would burn a flag the next day and that case went to the Supreme Court, and a very young Jim Heath, before he anointed himself a reverend and became Horton Heat.

Nardwuar: Jello, what can you tell the people about this band right here—Mana Mana? ... [Nardwuar hands Jello a record.]

Jello: Oh, we have a double LP now, eh? I didn't know they made all this other stuff. It was a Finnish band, a pretty interesting one, and (I hope I get this right) the singer's name is Jouni Mömmö, who was presented to me by the person whose label this originally came out on, Gaga Goodies, as the Roky Erickson of Finland. You definitely feel there's somebody with a deep soul and a very interesting mind at work here. Plus, there's a master guitar player I really love named Otra, who also is in a band called Psychoplasma and another one called Enter, as well. Then, later, I got the word that Jouni Mömmö had killed himself, unfortunately, so this was the last of his work.

Nardwuar: Were you gonna maybe have them released on Alternative Tentacles. That was the rumor.

kicking in doors with Darby Crash?

Jello: No comment. Do another question.

Nardwuar: Jello Biafra, winding up here...

Jello: Keep going.

Nardwuar: I want to ask you about the band Death. Is it true that Death had a bunch of 7"s and you found these rare 7"s of theirs, a box of them?

Jello: I did not find a box. I found two or three of them. I just got one off a guy's mail order list based on his description and really like it and asked if he had any more. I think a couple more came my way. I'm down to, I think, one now. I had no idea who they were. I mean, how many people did? I just thought, "Wow, this is really cool. It's like some unknown thing from Michigan and clearly this band heard the MC5. This is an excellent unknown record." Then I gave it up to Drag City for finding the guys, although I guess they were always active musicians after they relocated to Burlington, Vermont, and then I found there was a whole unreleased album. What amazes me about this is how much in a vacuum—before Ramones or Pistols or anybody were on people's radar screens—there's so many flashes of Bad Brains on this record.

Nardwuar: Lastly here, Jello, what can you tell people about the... [Nardwuar hands Jello a record.]

Jello: *McRock* album. I've never seen this. You sure you don't wanna give this to Dave MDC? [pause] Oh, yeah. It's Canada only, because there's "Teenage Head" on there. [laughs] I wonder what you're supposed to do with McDonald's in order to acquire one of these, or what was the giveaway if you bought more poisonous food? I don't know.

Nardwuar: Jello, anything else you wanna add to the people out there at all?

Jello: Not that I can think of.

Nardwuar: Well, thanks so much Jello. Keep on rockin' in the free world and doot doola doot doo...

Jello: Tweet tweet.

To hear this interview
(and many others with Jello)
please hop to nardwuar.com

Expand Civil Rights Laws to Include Social Class

By Chris Pepus

Illustrations by Evan Wolff

AMERICA IS DYING OF INEQUALITY. The Center for Economic and Policy Research reports that “the income share of just the top one-half of the top 1 percent grew from 5.39 percent of the nation’s income in 1979 to 13.37 percent in 2010.” CEPR found that “the share of the bottom 90 [percent] fell from 67.65 percent to 53.74 percent,” during the same period. The Great Recession spawned by the financial crash has officially ended, but upward redistribution of wealth is still the order of the day. Stock prices are reaching new highs, amid crushing poverty, joblessness, and debt. The social divide will only get worse unless government ends right-wing austerity policies, which make everyone but the rich pay for the crisis caused by the rich.

We will not reverse the decline and fall of the American people until the people understand how the wealthy exploit them every day. Many activists, journalists, scholars, and filmmakers are working to show Americans in vivid terms just how they are being cheated. But the propaganda efforts of corporate media have been very successful, particularly in convincing the public that “freedom” means unregulated corporate power. Also, economic relationships can seem impersonal, causing many Americans to believe that inequality is beyond human control.

Fortunately, the civil rights movement created a framework for understanding the problems we face, as well as a means of addressing them. Americans may not yet fully grasp the workings of economic exploitation. But, thanks to decades of civil rights struggles, nearly everyone is familiar with the concepts of prejudice and discrimination. And that is the essence of our economically divided society: prejudice and discrimination against those who are not wealthy or of high social status. Civil rights laws have proven effective against unequal treatment based on race, sex, religion, and national origin. We must expand those laws to prohibit unequal treatment based on social class.

Concepts of class are so backward in America that we lack even a proper term to describe class prejudice. Words like racist and sexist are commonplace, but what do you call a rich person who hates working-class people or even middle-class ones? The usual term is snob, which suggests an annoying but harmless character who frets about the placement of salad forks at a table setting. An alternative, classist, is too similar to other words, especially when spoken. The term I use is class bigot, and I find myself using it a lot. Likewise, when police or other authorities target people based on race, religion, or gender, we call that racial, religious, or gender profiling. Hardly anyone talks about *social* profiling, but it happens all the time.

Can civil rights law transform our class-ridden society? To answer that, we’ll need to review some history. The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (ratified in 1868) mandates that “No State shall . . . deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” Along with the Fifteenth Amendment, which protects voting rights, the Fourteenth was meant to guarantee equal status for black citizens in the aftermath of the Civil War.



However, racists disregarded those guarantees, especially in the former Confederate states. It was not until the 1950s and '60s that the federal government intervened decisively to enforce the Constitution. Citing the "equal protection" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, the U.S. Supreme Court banned segregated public schools in its 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. President Lyndon Johnson and the U.S. Congress added new weapons to the fight against injustice: the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The result was remarkable, if incomplete, progress toward an integrated America.

The Civil Rights Act remains the basis for a wide range of legal protections. Title IV of the Act forbids educational discrimination based on "race, color, religion, or national origin." Title VII deals with employment and includes provisions against unequal treatment due to sex, in addition to the categories mentioned in Title IV. Title VI applies the Act's regulations to

were thrown out by the prosecution, and not a single one of the remaining clients took a disposition that involved any jail time," Walshe wrote. "That small amount of bail money posted on their behalf was, literally, the price of their liberty." A 2010 study showed that 87 percent of non-felony defendants in NYC who were assigned bail of \$1,000 or less were unable to pay it. It is no exaggeration to say that, in such cases, courts are deciding guilt and punishment based on social class.

The bail issue is a question of court procedure and therefore violates the principle of "equal protection of the laws" at its most fundamental. But when judges and prosecutors use non-felony defendants' poverty as a means of extracting a guilty plea or imposing a harsher sentence, there is currently no recourse. That is because, unlike race or gender, class is not a category that triggers legal protections. We should amend the law to fix that.

Class bigotry poisons justice by other means as well. There

We will not reverse the decline and fall of the American people until the people understand how the wealthy exploit them every day.

government agencies that receive federal funds.

Congress has expanded the scope of this legislation since the 1960s. For instance, the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibit sex bias in education, closing a loophole in the 1964 Act. To enforce these statutes, the U.S. Department of Justice maintains a Civil Rights Division and there is also a Commission on Civil Rights. Private citizens can sue in federal court when they believe their lawful rights have been violated. But discrimination based on social class is the defining evil of the age and it is currently beyond the reach of our legal system.

Admittedly, class is a less obvious identity than race or sex, but identities rooted in religion or national origin are not always obvious and those are covered by civil rights legislation. And, admittedly, not all provisions of civil rights law could apply to class. For instance, it is illegal to make decisions on loan or rental applications based on race. Obviously, it is not feasible to institute a blanket ban on discrimination by class in such cases, because that would prevent lenders and property owners from checking applicants' incomes or credit histories.

The key distinction here is between interactions that are determined by a person's financial standing (such as purchasing, borrowing, and leasing) and those that are not or should not be (such as law enforcement, public safety, education, and employment). In the latter category of interactions, it is wrong to discriminate against citizens merely because they possess less wealth or occupy a lower social status. But, all too often, that is exactly what occurs. Let's look at some examples of class bigotry in action and consider whether improved civil rights legislation could help.

In a recent article for the *Guardian*, Sadhbh Walshe showed that U.S. courts are rife with class bias. She cited studies of non-felony criminal cases, which demonstrated that courts treat defendants more harshly if they are unable to pay bail. When defendants are locked up pending trial, prosecutors have the upper hand and are likely to offer more punitive plea bargains.

When a legal-aid organization in New York City started posting bail for impoverished misdemeanor defendants, the situation changed dramatically. "Over half of their clients' cases

is no better illustration of that than the contrast between law enforcement's harsh measures against ordinary citizens, such as peaceful protesters, and its refusal to take action against Wall Street criminals. The country is still suffering from the effects of the financial crisis, which was caused by fraud. Banks issued home loans at inflated prices, often knowing that the borrowers would not be able to keep up payments. Then the banks created worthless securities out of those loans and sold them to unsuspecting customers around the world.

In fact, the banksters-in-chief at Goldman Sachs were so sure that the price of their securities would collapse that they bought insurance on them even after they sold them. When the inevitable crash came, no one at Goldman Sachs was punished. Instead, the company received taxpayer-funded bailouts, both directly and from another bailed-out firm, American International Group (AIG), which had insured those fake securities. "At least \$13 billion of the taxpayer money given to AIG in the bailout ultimately went to Goldman," financial journalist Matt Taibbi reported.

Many other financial institutions, including foreign ones, benefitted from bailouts in the form of direct government payments, special credit arrangements, or guarantees. A 2011 report by the government's General Accounting Office put the price of the Federal Reserve Board's corporate welfare to leading banks at \$16 trillion. (America's Gross Domestic Product, the value of all goods and services in the country, stands at about \$15.7 trillion.)

The people were not so fortunate: the economic disaster resulting from Wall Street's scams inflicts new casualties every day. Since the taxpayers saved the banks and their stockholders, punishing the banksters who caused the crisis is literally the least the government can do. Taibbi sums up the matter with this question: "We couldn't find a single person on Wall Street to do even a day in jail for losing 40% of the world's wealth in a criminal fraud scheme?"

The crimes didn't stop after the bailouts. Wall Street made a fortune off toxic mortgages, so the next step was to profit from the houses themselves by repossessing and reselling them. There was only one problem: the banks had cut up the mortgages and

Civil rights laws have proven effective against unequal treatment based on race, sex, religion, and national origin.

We must expand those laws to prohibit unequal treatment based on social class.

spread the pieces across different securities. That tactic helped the scam artists cover their tracks, but made it practically impossible to establish ownership of any individual mortgage. Wall Street bosses came up with a solution to that problem: perjury. They presented fake mortgage documents in court. William Black, a former federal regulator, told *Democracy Now!* that “what [the bankers] were doing was lying systematically to the tune, typically, of the large places, of 10,000 times a month.” They were “committing felonies that would lead to people being made homeless in America.”

Not satisfied with that, the banks also repossessed homes of buyers who were legally entitled to refinance. In some cases, they seized the houses of people who were not behind on their payments or who were military personnel on combat duty, and therefore supposed to be protected from foreclosure. The list of banks involved in illegal dispossession includes Bank of America, Citibank, Wells Fargo, and J.P. Morgan Chase.

The Obama administration and officials in 49 states took up the issue, reaching a settlement with the banks in 2012. Most victims of illegal foreclosure—about 80 percent—will receive compensation of \$300 to \$1,000. No, that is not a misprint. The settlement grants immunity to the banks, so the only choice given to those who lost their homes unjustly is take it or leave it.

If the Ku Klux Klan threw African Americans out of their homes, not only would the Klansmen go to jail for it, but they would be forced to return the stolen houses. If the government cut a deal with the KKK granting immunity to the group’s members and allowing them to pay practically nothing, the evicted residents could sue the government for racially discriminatory law enforcement. They could also obtain a court injunction preventing the corrupt bargain between politicians and Klansmen from going into effect.

Victims of the real-life illegal dispossession case should have the right to sue. Government officials acted with gross bias toward the too-big-to-fail banks and their too-rich-to-lose stockholders. The main difference between the hypothetical Klan example above and the actual banker home-theft case is that the bankers’ thugs don’t wear sheets. Let’s expand civil rights law and create a remedy for wholesale property theft by the wealthy, one that applies even when political figures and prosecutors are too cozy with the social elite to care.

Speaking of which, in February, U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren criticized government officials’ eagerness to reach

settlements with posh criminals rather than prosecuting them. At a hearing of the Senate Banking Committee, Warren asked a panel of federal regulators to tell her “about the last few times you’ve taken the biggest financial institutions on Wall Street all the way to a trial.” None of the panelists could cite a single case. Warren pointed out the contradiction at the heart of American “justice.” “There are district attorneys and U.S. attorneys who are out there every day squeezing ordinary citizens on sometimes very thin grounds and taking them to trial,” she said. “I’m really concerned that too big to fail has become too big for trial.”

Class bias is a matter of life and death. In its annual “Death on the Job” report, released in April, the AFL-CIO presented statistics on work-related deaths, including those from disease caused by exposure to dangerous materials at work. “Since 1970, only 84 cases have been prosecuted, with defendants serving a total of 89 months in jail,” the report stated. “During this time there were more than 390,000 worker deaths.” That amounts to one month of jail time per 4,382 workers killed.

Compare that to government officials’ response to terror attacks. In that case, they are so aggressive that they don’t think twice about violating civil liberties. There is a gross imbalance in the way American government responds to threats against its citizens’ safety. When the issue is foreign-based terrorism, our gung-ho authorities refuse to stay within their constitutional limits. But when workers die needlessly on the job, the authorities do nothing. The politicians, prosecutors, and many of the regulators are more concerned about corporate profits than workers’ lives. How long before al-Qaeda leaders figure out that if they want to kill Americans with impunity, they can forget about making bombs and just open unsafe factories in the U.S.? Restoring balance to law enforcement will prove a big job, but we can fight against death at the workplace by using amended civil rights law to hold corporate and government officials accountable in court.

Improved civil rights legislation would end many other destructive inequities. So-called “right to work” laws, which effectively prevent union organizing, would finally become illegal, simply because they are discriminatory. Stockholders and other business owners are allowed to form groups for collective bargaining: those groups are called corporations. Created by the state, corporations let business owners take advantage of a wide range of privileges, including tax breaks and the ability to walk

away from certain debts. Permitting business owners to organize for their interests, while denying workers the same right, is the definition of unequal treatment.

If class becomes a category of civil rights law, it will allow us to combat social elitism in higher education. The percentage of working-class students at top universities is far below the level that would trigger widespread outrage if any other group were so systematically excluded. Many leading colleges openly admit that they grant enormous admissions preferences to "legacies," children of rich graduates. In 2009, two sociologists, T. J. Espenshade and A.W. Radford, published a book showing that leading colleges penalize working-class white applicants. The deafening media silence that has accompanied that revelation should end with a legal challenge.

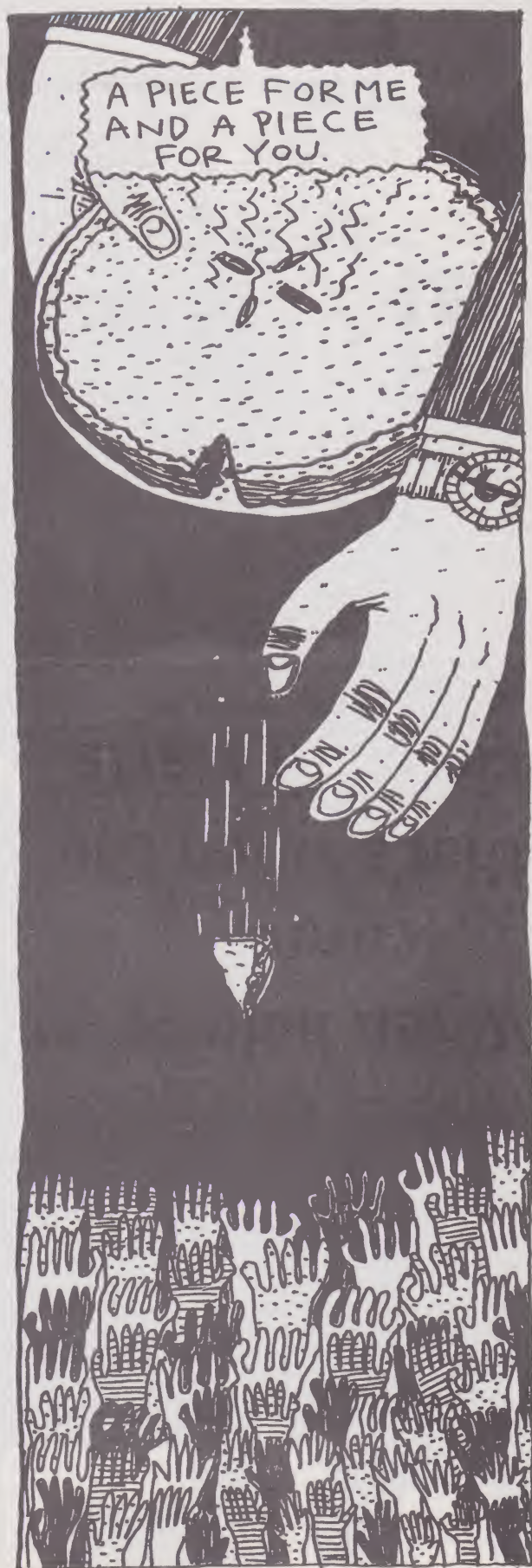
When offering examples of how civil rights legislation could apply to class, I glossed over one problem for the sake of clarity. I depicted the courts acting to enforce the new law, rather than resisting it. Actually, civil rights laws are under fire and conservatives on the bench are doing much of the shooting. The U.S. Supreme Court is currently considering suits aimed at eliminating race-based affirmative action and key elements of the Voting Rights Act. Even if those efforts fail, the fact remains that racial segregation is on the rise again in America's schools and neighborhoods. We need to build a powerful coalition to defend existing anti-discrimination laws. Broadening the definition of civil rights to encompass social class would help that effort by giving more Americans—specifically, economically disadvantaged whites—a stake in this crucial legislation.

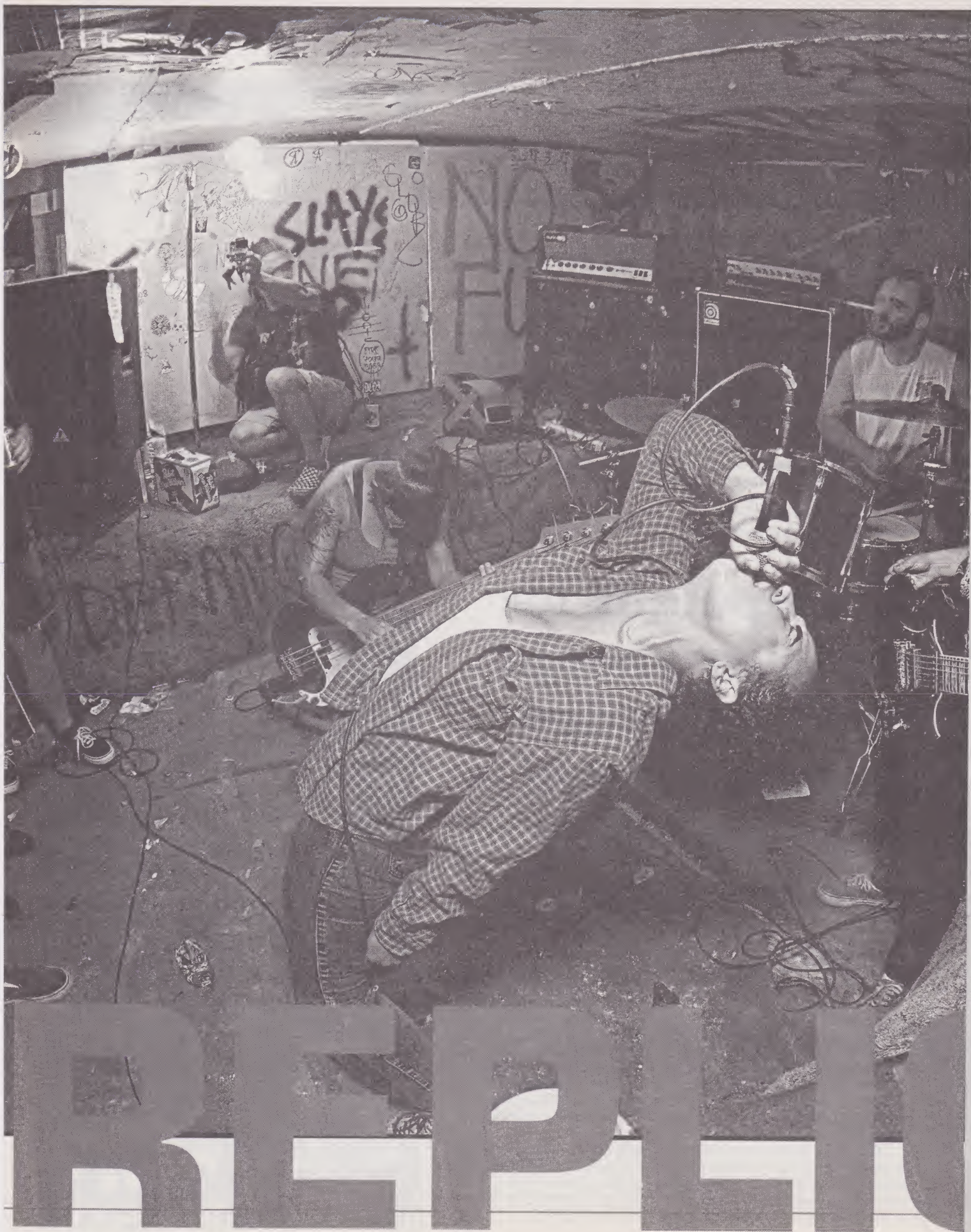
Corporate attacks on the lives of everyday Americans are successful because working-class people are often divided by race and sex. Under


Campaigns for equality should unite excluded groups *instead of setting them against each other.*

our unreformed class system, the quest for racial and gender diversity entails discriminating against working-class white men while continuing to privilege rich white men. Liberal college administrators may not acknowledge that, but the targets of their class bigotry are fully aware of it. Likewise, working-class women understand that "affirmative action for women" normally applies only to bourgeois women. Campaigns for equality should unite excluded groups instead of setting them against each other.

This plan to include class within the scope of civil rights law belongs at the center of the progressive agenda. It offers a comprehensive solution to the problems of our unequal society. Just as important, it will strengthen and focus demands for change by prompting Americans to think systematically about the role of class in daily life.







Dharma Mooney-Haynes: Vocals Juliana Almeida: Guitar
Alicia Arnold: Bass B. Rousse: Drums


Intro and interview by Lory Gil

Photos by Udea Yosuke

Layout by Matt Average

On a cold winter night in November of 2011, a group of friends were hanging out at a house show in Oakland and decided to make a band. Originally, the project was only meant to last a few months. Nothing permanent. However, two years later, Replica is still going strong and is one of the most talked about bands in hardcore. Replica's sound rips through your brain with a rage and energy that can't be stopped. Their songs express elements of Discharge's influence, but with the spirit and speed of a faster generation of music. You can hear moments of early 2000s thrashcore topped off with a generous helping of American hardcore from the 1980s. In their short lifespan, they've managed to win the hearts of fans around the nation, playing at Chaos in Tejas, touring with Completed Exposition from Japan, and releasing two ripping records that both make your face melt and your toes tap. Their debut five-song self-titled EP is on Prank Records (prankrecords.com). I recently caught up with Replica.

“It’s always fascinating to see who’s attracted to your pain and anger.”



Lory: Tell me about your musical experience prior to Replica. How long have you been playing music and what instruments did you play?

Alicia: I first started learning how to play music on clarinet when I was nine, so that’s twenty-four years of playing music so far. Over the years I’ve also learned to play baritone horn, bass guitar, electric guitar, and piano, and have performed and recorded in various bands and ensembles. My first paying job ever was playing bass guitar in an off-Broadway playhouse musical in my hometown as a teenager.

B.: I’ve been playing drums since I was about fourteen years old, so I’ve been playing drums over twenty-one years now... woah.

Juliana: I bought my first guitar when I was fourteen but just started playing in bands when I was nineteen.

Dharma: I was singing jazz from eleven to fourteen.

Lory: What bands have you been in previously?

Alicia: When I was thirteen I had a punk band called Fallout, and in the early 2000s in Philly, I played in a dark wave band called X’s X’s. There have been lots of other projects along the way, too.

B.: Before I started playing drums, I was the singer of a band for about a year and half. We were called U.R.N., from Valrico, FL. As soon as I started playing drums, I was constantly doing project bands with my friends, something I still love to do. My first “serious” band started in 1993 and was called the End Of The Century Party. Then, I also played on the first two records for the band Murder-Suicide Pact. Both of those bands were from Tampa, FL. I moved to the Bay Area in 1998 where I was in Scholastic Deth, and in Chicago in the mid-2000s I did a noise/punk band called Seepage. These days I also play drums in No Statik and I recently joined Conquest For Death.

Juliana: My first band was an all-girl band called Infect in Sao Paulo, Brazil, my hometown. Infect started in 1998 and lasted for like four years. We put some stuff on vinyl over there, in Europe, and the USA by 625Thrash, but we never toured abroad. I’ve basically just played in hardcore punk bands. After that, I played in War Inside, Sguardo Realta—all in Sao Paulo—and when I moved to the Bay Area in 2011 we started Replica. Right now I also play in Trenches.

Dharma: I got into punk and did vocals in my first punk band, Duck & Cover, from sixteen to nineteen. I jammed with a couple bands on bass before Replica asked me to join them. I’ve been playing music all my life.

Lory: What do you do for your day jobs? What pays the bills so you can play rock and roll?

Alicia: I work as an elementary teacher in a public school in Oakland. I guess, at this point, it’s a career. I’ve been teaching for eight years now at my school and spent some years before that teaching in Philly.

B.: I work as a teaching assistant and lecturer in philosophy in a university. I got my Ph.D. in philosophy about a year-and-a-half ago. I supplement my bad university income—“lecturer” is a very poorly compensated position in academia—doing non-academic research, consulting, and writing.

Juliana: I have two jobs, I’m a Brazilian/Portuguese private tutor and I also work in a café in West Oakland. I just work ‘cause I have to pay bills. [laughs]

Dharma: I’ve been a workaholic since high school, working as a bookkeeper slash accountant slash administrative assistant. I also sometimes help out at a non-profit plant nursery that my family runs in south Berkeley. These support my record, movie, and food addictions.

Lory: How have your careers and jobs affected or influenced Replica?

Alicia: Balancing work and the band is sometimes really challenging for me. Teaching is very demanding, and I get tired really easily trying to keep up with the energy level of my students! I usually can’t practice too late on a weekday and touring is really only possible for me when there is a break from school. I also have to limit the weekday shows I play. I have played Replica songs for my students. They love it! They’re always asking me about the band.

B.: I love teaching philosophy and it combines well with doing music. I think doing music makes me better at doing and teaching philosophy. And, like Alicia says, being a teacher means some early mornings, but in other ways it meshes well with being in a band, since it means being able to take certain times off that make touring easier.

Lory: I know that the band came together as an idea from Juliana when you were all at a show together in November, 2011. Was it hard pinning down practice days, stuff like that?

B.: When we first started, we planned on doing the band as a quick project to last just a couple of months. Our attitude was to write as many songs as soon as possible and to record a demo right away.

Alicia: We assumed a limited time frame, so we wanted to play some shows pretty quickly too.

B.: Yeah, in five weeks, we wrote five songs, played our first show, and recorded a demo. Ultimately, we were able to keep the band going, and, since then, it’s been going like crazy!

Alicia: We were all able to dedicate the time to practice at least once a week in a space that was graciously shared with us, on some shared equipment. A lot of people helped us out tremendously.

Lory: Did the band click right from the start, or did it take a while to get into the groove of things?

Juliana: Yeah, I think we clicked immediately. Since the beginning, I had a strong connection with B., probably because we both come from a thrashcore background. I loved Alicia’s bass lines and Dharma’s tuff singing.

Dharma: Earlier that year, my life had changed significantly. You could almost say it ended, and I had a lot of raw emotions and ideas fermenting in my head. And after Duck & Cover stopped playing shows, there was no therapy for me. Ruby of No Statik put me in contact with B., suggesting that I do vocals for his new band, and I’ve been writhing in Replica ever since. And I’m fully aware of how difficult it is to get a band started and to keep it going, so I consider it very fortunate for us to have been able to click so well and just take off, especially considering that I met everyone—save B.—from shows and at our first practice.

Lory: You have a tape, a flexi, and a 7” record. For only being a band for about two years, you’re very prolific. How do you have such a creative flow? Can you talk about the songwriting process a bit?

Juliana: I brought the first ideas for songs in the beginning of the band, but since the first practice people added their ideas. So, I think it’s a real collective process. But I don’t think we have that many songs. We have, in total, like about fifteen songs. The tape and flexi have the same songs.

B.: I think every band has their rhythm and seasons of songwriting. Some of our songs we just made up during practice on the spot, and some of them were brought in pre-cooked by Juliana, Alicia, and sometimes Dharma, with all of us collaborating on the composition.

Alicia: I think about songs when I’m traveling and away from playing any type of music. This just really gives me time to think about what I’m writing and motivates me to pick up the bass or the guitar when I have the next opportunity. I always carry around a sound recorder so I have a way to document the riffs I’m thinking about. I just hum my ideas into the recorder and work with the song like that.

Dharma: I mainly just write lyrics. I've written two of our songs on bass. But we complete the songs collectively, for the most part.

Lory: You just got back from a tour with Completed Exposition from Japan. Any funny tour stories?

Alicia: The first night they were here, we took them out to get "American food," which ended up being burgers and fries. I wasn't too hungry, so B. and I shared a veggie burger. We cut it in half to split it between us. All the CxEx guys watched us and proceeded to cut their burgers in half too! [laughs] Whoops. Before CxEx left, they recorded a few songs with Greg (Earhammer). They covered one of our songs and they invited us to cover one of theirs to be included on a potential split EP if we ever make it to Japan! B. and I also did back-up vocals on their song "Choco Taco," so named for one of their tour delights.

B.: Yes, it was funny and inspiring how they recorded songs that expressed their experiences on tour. There was "Choco Taco," a Replica song, and a song inspired by the drunk guy in Santa Barbara singing something from Cheech and Chong.

Juliana: [laughs] I didn't know that! Tour was amazing. I didn't know what to expect since we didn't know them personally before the tour, but turns out they were really nice guys and—besides being an awesome band—it was really interesting to get to know them and their culture.

Dharma: I love CxEx! They had an amazing stage presence every single night. Sarcasm translated very well, making for great laughs despite the language barrier. And such good, whole-hearted, fun dudes. We had the term "kichigai" for the "crazy guy" of every show we played, whether they were hilariously drunk, strung out, or just psycho. Jared, who mastered Cheech with such beautiful drunken veracity in Santa Barbara, was our favorite "kichigai" of the tour and it provided us with many days of laughter.

Lory: Where did you play?

B.: We went up and down the entire West Coast. It was great to show them around and to share their experience of the USA. We got to go to beaches, big trees, rivers, Hollywood Boulevard, a boxing ring, we ate a bunch of tacos and hummus, and it was awesome! Jeremy (RPND) is a great driver and a great tour helper.

Lory: You are big proponents of the house show scene. Why do you like playing house and basement shows?

B.: People are there right next to you. The intensity is high. You're sharing a sweaty moment 'til it's time to say bye-bye.

Juliana: The Oakland punk scene is basically only house and basement shows and I love it. I don't think we ever played in a bar in Oakland. Really different from San Francisco, where most shows have to happen in bars because of the lack of proper spaces.



In theory, I prefer basements to bars because they're always all-ages, but the truth is there are not many kids in our scene. Anyways, I like the idea that if a kid wants to go to our show they can get in. The energy is always different between basement and bar shows. Basements are much more into the DIY idea, and that makes the difference. The most intense Replica shows happened in basements and I thought I was going to die, but that's cool anyways. [laughs]

Dharma: I love basement shows. Anything can happen. The freedom of spontaneity is pure and candid, unlike bars. And, yes, while there aren't many young kids in our immediate scene and at our shows, there are tons of kids in the Bay Area punk scene as a whole, me being one of 'em. There are just so many things happening in the Bay Area with punk and we don't always cross paths. But it's great when we do.

Lory: Replica has grown immensely in popularity over the past few years. How has all of this excitement and notoriety affected you individually?

Alicia: There have been a lot of great opportunities with this band. It's been really fun to play lots of rad shows, meet a ton of amazing people, and travel around. To get positive feedback about the music that we're creating is really an amazing sensation.

B.: I like to share music. I want to do it more. We've already been offered many great possibilities to go and play in other parts of the world. I hope we can do it. And, yes, we've benefited immensely from the help of others along a well-paved DIY community path.

Juliana: Yeah, traveling is the most fun part of being in a band here and—thanks

to Replica—I traveled to many different parts of the USA that I have never been before, so that's awesome. That's a totally different reality from Brazil. It's really hard to tour over there; too expensive. Gear is too expensive, having a van is too expensive, people can't afford buying merch, and cities are too distant from each other. So I'm really glad to have the opportunity of doing this here. And I hope I can travel even more in the future, including abroad.

Dharma: I've seen many new faces since we started and encountered many new characters. As it often happens, people who couldn't otherwise care less about your existence start to tune-in to what you're broadcasting and it's made for a lot of opportunities to connect with other scenes and communities in many places. Playing shows is a constant reminder that I am amongst many other, feeling individuals. I like to be in the mix and—popular or not—it's always fascinating to see who's attracted to your pain and anger.

Lory: You've recently been in the studio to record new songs. Are you planning on releasing a full-length album?

Alicia: Yes, we do have a plan for a new release. We're focusing right now on more songwriting and playing less shows. If everything works out, we should be releasing an LP in early 2014. Thanks so much, Lory, for asking us to do this interview! You're rad!

r-e-p-l-i-c-a.bandcamp.com

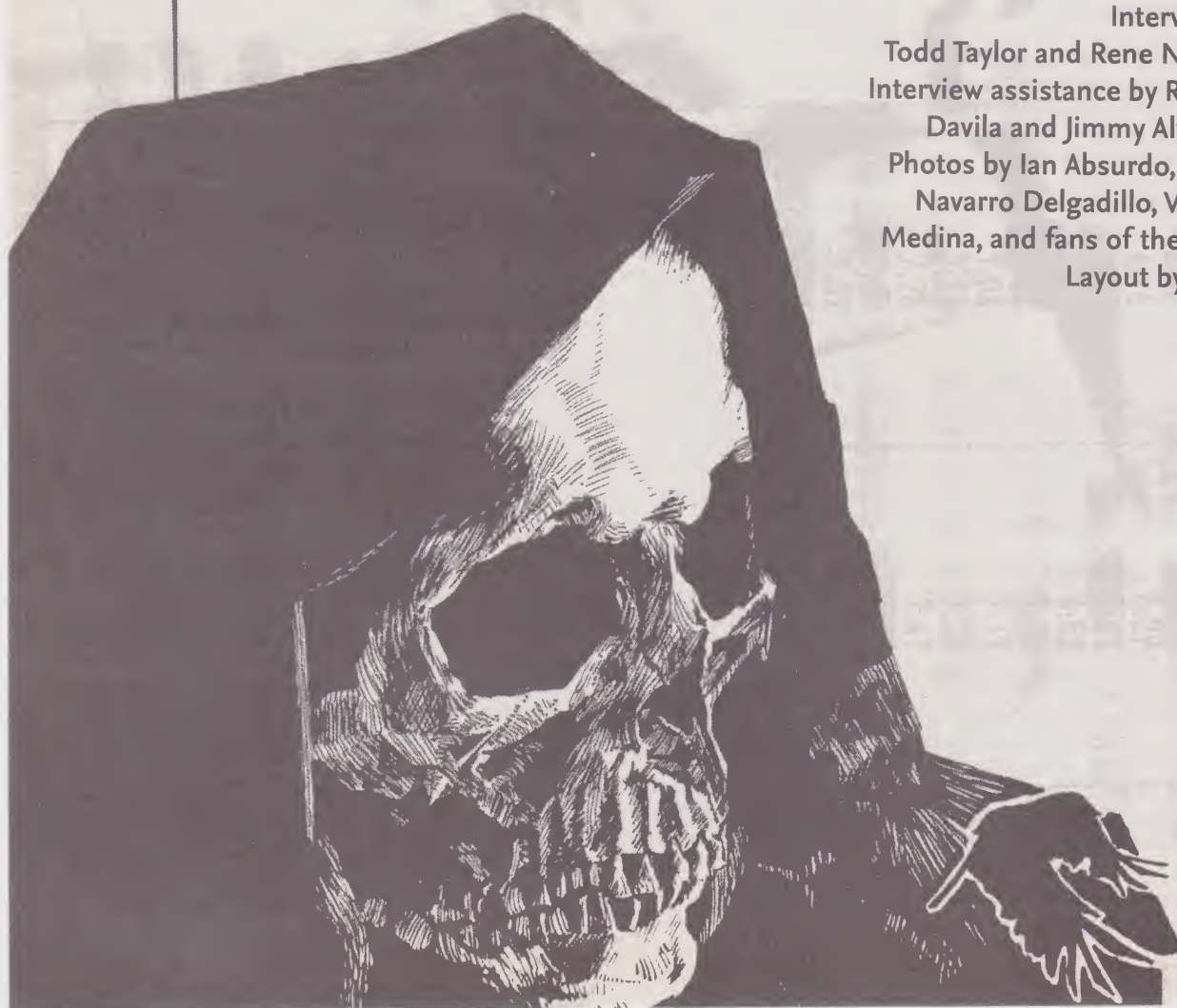


GENERACION



SUICIDA

Interview by
Todd Taylor and Rene Navarro
Interview assistance by Richard
Davila and Jimmy Alvarado
Photos by Ian Absurdo, Felipe
Navarro Delgadillo, Vincent
Medina, and fans of the band.
Layout by Daryl



Los Angeles is an unsolved mystery shattered into hundreds of pieces: mirrors, daggers, broken things. DIY punk isn't just one thing in Los Angeles. It's not a unified scene, which is a blessing and a curse. It's a fissured spectrum that's routinely shattered or too-thinly sliced by subgenre. It's fractured by the immense geography of Los Angeles itself. People—punks included—become isolated by rivers, freeways, social class, customs, race, transit lines, and invisible divisions that separate neighborhoods—sometimes mid-street—that you'd never know existed until you've live there or are shown it by someone who does. That segregation is worsened by generations-old neighborhood pride and prejudice, friends parting ways over ego, hubris, and those who seek to become the police chiefs of their punk scenes. The isolation and separation doesn't end at doorsteps. It goes deeper, more personal, to semantics, birthplaces, skin color, blood, family, and other factors no one has control over when they come into this world.

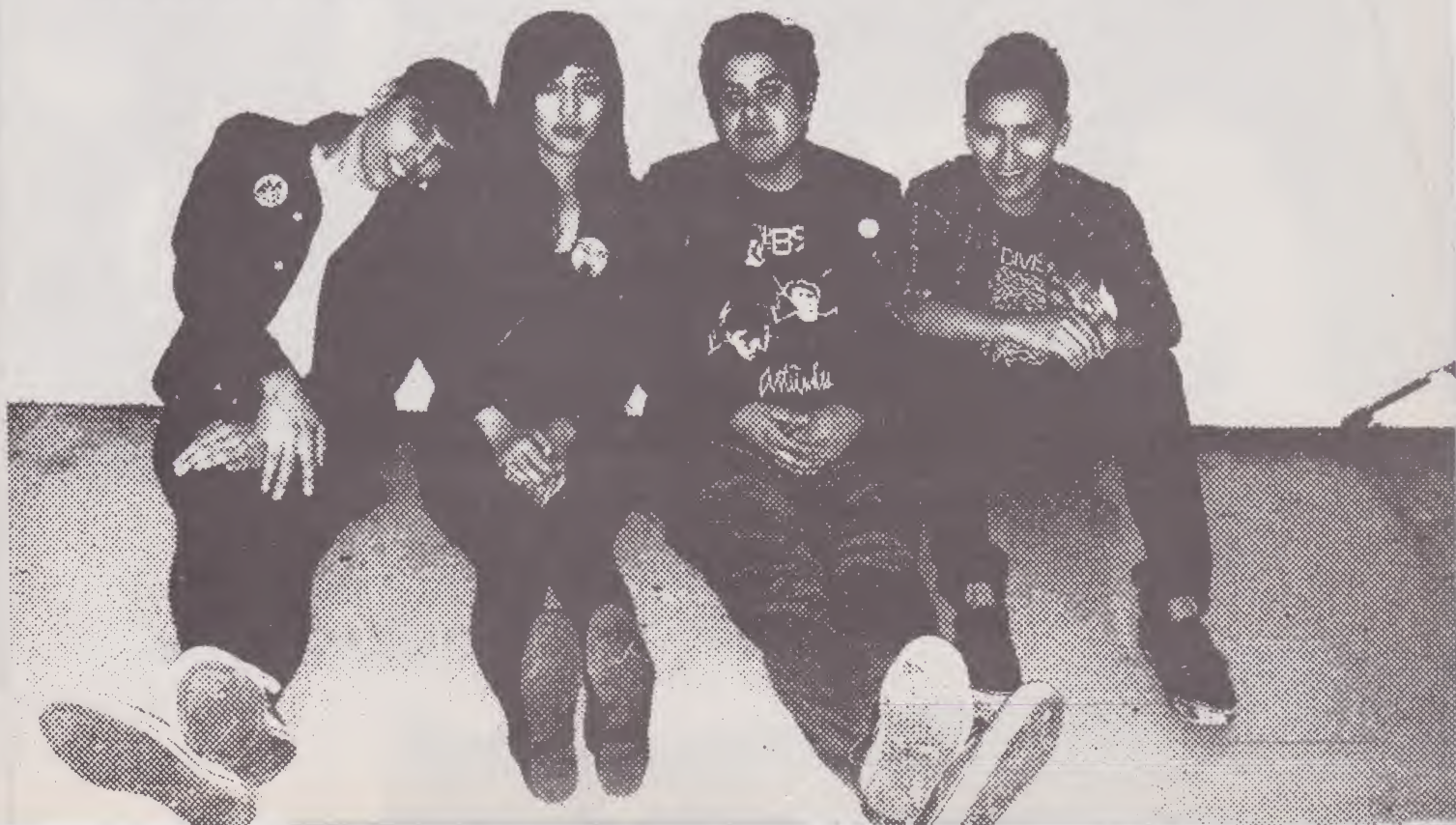
Welcome to Los Angeles.

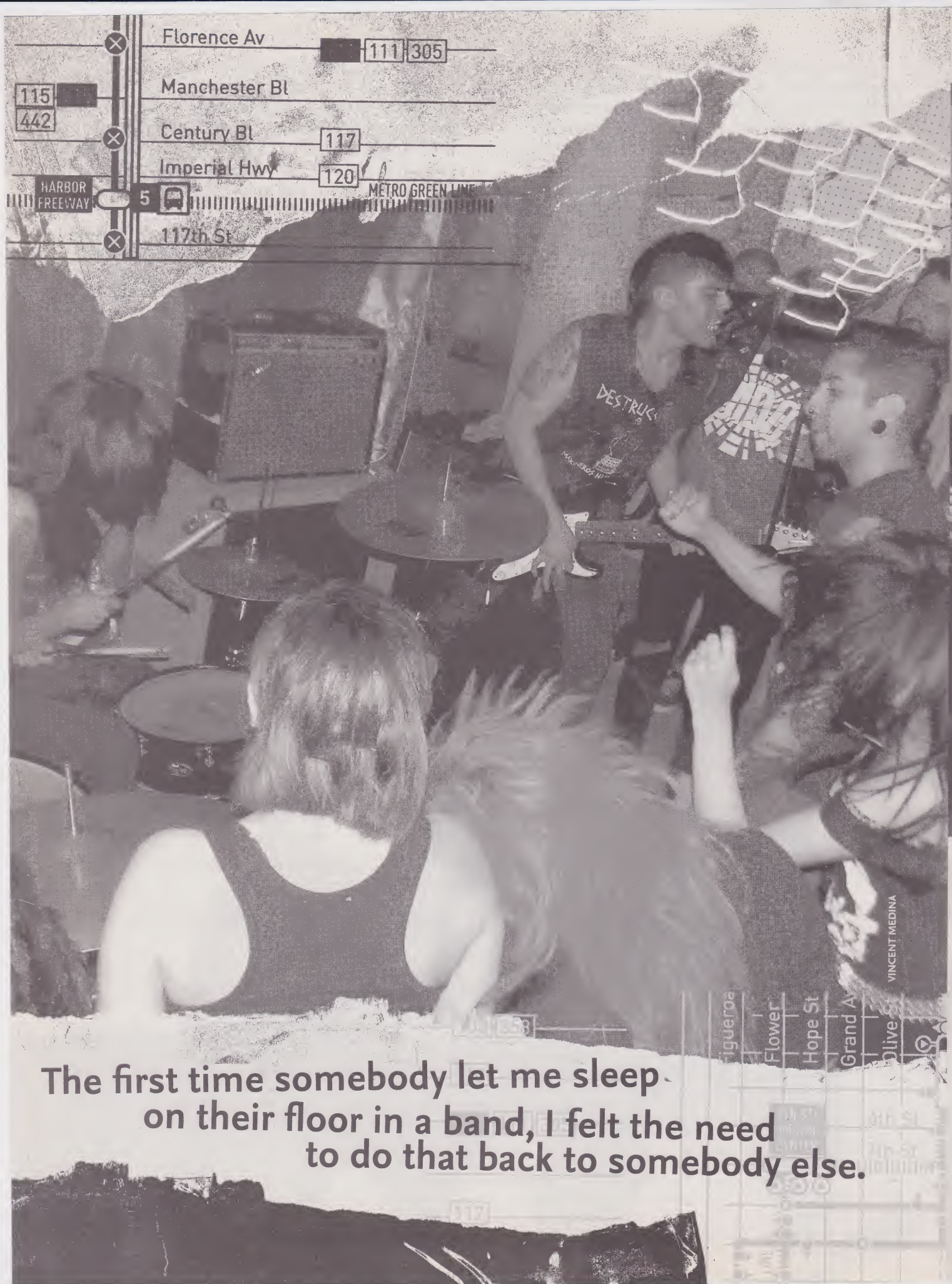
Generacion Suicida's a four-piece band. They play icy, angular, catchy punk with oscillating male/female vocals creating a serrated edge of paranoia and anxiety. It's right up my alley. I highly recommend their entire catalog. (Their debut album *Con La Muerte a Tu Lado* was just released and it's amazing.) Two of its members are from South Central L.A. One lives in Koreatown, while another lives in the Orange

County city of Anaheim. They sing solely in Spanish and remind me of bands from other countries, mainly Umeå, Sweden—in the Ny Våg tradition of the Vicious—and Copenhagen—Gorilla Angreb and No Hope For The Kids—which sort of brings the sound back home to California because those Scandinavian bands borrowed heavily from Los Angeles's past (particularly late '70s Dangerhouse). The irony doesn't escape me. I'm more conversant in the language of songs of many bands that are based 5,317 miles from Razorcake HQ than I am in some of the bands that live less than twenty miles away. It's not like I'm trying to be willfully ignorant of punk in my hometown. That's just the nature of the beast here in L.A. One mile past the last bus stop often is the end of the world.

Los Angeles is its own country.

The upside: some of the best DIY punk in the world has been and is being made in Los Angeles. We have a rich, diverse heritage. One that's as great as it is totally fucked and frustrating. But it's that real fight to be heard—even in your neighborhood—and to make meaningful music, that gives it such vitality and uniqueness. What do White Murder, Wreck Of The Zephyr, Thee Undertakers, Toys That Kill, Neighborhood Brats, Rough Kids, Spokenest, and Generacion Suicida have in common besides being active, L.A. punk bands? Not much, except they all rule in their own distinctive ways. And that's what keeps being a punk in L.A. exciting. -Todd Taylor





VINCENT MEDINA

The first time somebody let me sleep
on their floor in a band, I felt the need
to do that back to somebody else.

Mario: Guitar
Tony: Guitar, vocals
Kiwi: Drums, vocals
Juan: Bass

Todd: You guys are from either Sweden or Denmark, is that correct?

[laughter]

Tony: And we're not from East L.A., either.
Todd: That was my careful way of saying that. So, where, exactly, are you guys from? Lennox? Westmont?

Tony: The band started in South Central L.A. but now it has members from...

Mario: Mid-city, by Koreatown.

Tony: Me and Kiwi are from South Central L.A.

Juan: I'm from Anaheim, Orange County.

Todd: What describes South Central L.A.? For a while, local news and government weren't calling it South Central. They were calling it "South L.A." after the riots.

Tony: Well, it's still called South Central L.A., but, from what I hear, they were trying to name it South L.A. to get rid of the stigma. I grew up calling it South Central L.A. I grew up there my whole life.

Todd: What's exactly in the band's name? Is there a deeper context to it?

Tony: There's really nothing deep about it. We picked the name because of the record by The Vicious, *Suicidal Generation*. (7" b/w "Suspensions")

Todd: When I think of a "suicide generation" literally, there's no one left. Everyone commits suicide. The whole generation kills themselves. Okay, so I've lived in Highland Park (North East Los Angeles) the past thirteen years. I moved here in 2001 and I don't think there's been a week that's gone by that I haven't seen a kid—especially a Latino/Latina kid wearing a Misfits shirt. Can you explain that to me? Generation after generation—we live across from a middle school—it happens all the time. It's conspicuous.

Tony: There's two things, I think because we came to Highland Park High School. Kiwi graduated from there. I went there for about a month. But one thing I noticed about the punk kids there, growing up, is that a lot of the punks in Highland Park seemed to be more into the U.S. punk. In South Central, when I was in high school, all of the kids were into U.K. punk.

Todd: Like Conflict and Discharge?

Tony: Yeah, all that stuff, where kids in this area seem to be more into Misfits. At the time, I didn't really think much of it, but also I think maybe they're one of those bands that you just first get exposed to.

Todd: And it's a pretty fuckin' cool skull. You can't discount that. It's a pretty nice logo and you don't have to know anything about the Misfits whatsoever.

Tony: They were one of the first bands I heard. That could also be a thing, too.

Todd: A friend of ours saw this young lady on a bus who had three Drop Dead patches on them. They didn't know it was a band... but it's pretty amazing in this area—East

L.A., Central L.A.—that punk doesn't seem to be going away at all. It seems to be really resilient.

Todd: Where were each of you born?

Tony: I was born in Los Angeles.

Mario: I was also.

Kiwi: I was born in Guatemala, the city of Guatemala. I'm Nicaraguan and half Guatemalan.

Todd: At what age did you move to Los Angeles?

Kiwi: I was one.

Todd: What was the reason for moving?

Kiwi: My mom just migrated. Her mom moved here, so she moved here. We came along, too in '88.

Juan: I was born in Orange County.

Tony: He's the outsider. [laughter] It takes him an hour to get to practice.

Todd: Kiwi, do you volunteer also?

Kiwi: I was doing volunteer work at a homeless shelter. Now I'm just a full-time student.

Todd: What are you studying?

Kiwi: Psychology. I want to do mental health. I'm in my master's right now.

Todd: What was the exposure to punk rock that made you say, "I want to be a part of this"?

Tony: Well, for me, it was more when I was nineteen or so. When I was younger, after being in a band for a while, I started all the other stuff they were doing, like zines and setting up shows and touring. Flyers. I suck at drawing. I don't know how to draw or do artwork at all, but we had a zine for a while. *Fronteras Desarmadas*, which means disarmed borders.

Kiwi: Video zine. (vimeo.com/8630889)

Tony: Same name. It's still up on Vimeo. Right now, we organize shows—all the little things that really help other bands out. They stay at our house.

Juan: I do flyers and artwork for bands. I'm a tattoo artist.

Todd: By doing these extra things—you guys just toured the Pacific Northwest...

Tony: We went all the way up to Canada.

Todd: Do you think that helps? Because when people come to Los Angeles, they know you and you take care of them. The opposite happens when you tour. You did a show on KBOO, on "Life During Wartime"—does it make it easier?

Tony: It probably makes it easier because it makes people want to trust you. They know you, who you are already, they're probably going to be more willing to accept you, for one thing. We're all still people. People don't really trust other people. We mainly just do it because we're paying it back. The first time I went on a trip out of town, I was eighteen, seventeen. It didn't really go too well. I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't know where I was going. So, the first time somebody let me sleep on their floor in a band, I felt the need to do that back to somebody else. So we never really turn away bands when they're on tour.

Rene: Did you guys go all the way into Canada?

Tony: We went to Vancouver and Kamloops.

Todd: How were those shows?

Tony: Vancouver was awesome. Kamloops was awesome. Kamloops was a bit different. It's a really small town.

Rene: Sounds like a cereal.

Tony: It's a really weird town. We showed up and the scene is high school kids, but it's weird. We showed up, "Hey, we're here," and the kid was like, "Okay, cool." He didn't tell us anything else, so we just wandered around town. We didn't know where to go, so we stayed in a café, which was the only thing in town open, until the show started. We didn't know where we were at, but the kid was cool.

Kiwi: He was nice.

Tony: It was different for us.

Mario: We got him in trouble.

Tony: ...with his Mom. I don't know how old he is, but we show up. We went to play the show. The show was in the basement of this squatter house. I think it might have been one of the guys from Mass Grave. I'm not sure. There were maybe twenty, thirty kids who probably never heard of us. It's not that deep in Canada, but it's four, five hours past Vancouver. It was the first time I felt really far from home because they were like, "Los Angeles? Nah, I've never heard any bands from down there." But all the kids went crazy, regardless.

Todd: They're starving for it.

Tony: I don't know if bands go up there often. It was really fun. Afterwards, we stayed at that kid's house. I thought that it was cool. In the morning, I woke up to brush my teeth and I just hear his mom being, "Are there people in the house?! Who's that person in the restroom?" So I got up and told everyone, "Hey we gotta go now." So we snuck out.

And on the way back, our tire blew out. Our battery died in the middle of the mountains about two hours from Vancouver, with no cell phone reception. This guy drove by and said, "Hey, is there a problem?" and I told him, "Yeah, I think our battery's dead." And he's like, "Hmm. Maybe the alternator." We told him, "We don't know what else to do." So he said, "I'll give one of you guys a ride to the next town," which is thirty minutes away. "It's the only other town. Let's hope they have a battery and I'll bring it back." So that's what we did. He brought the battery and we put it in. He said, "Okay, I'll drive behind you the whole way back to Vancouver."

Todd: That's pretty nice.

Tony: He's like, "We're heading in that direction anyway. In case you guys break down again, we'll help and give you guys another hand." You know how people always talk about how Canadians—he was just super nice. He was an example.

Todd: Sometimes stereotypes work.

Tony: As soon as we got to Vancouver, the battery died again. We took it to a mechanic in Vancouver. He said it was corroded cables. He cleaned the cables. We were able to drive it to the border, where the car died again. We got towed across the border into the nearest



town, Bellingham, where some asshole mechanic charged us five hundred bucks. So, in total, we spent \$650.

Juan: A one hundred dollar job, he charged us five hundred.

Kiwi: We did tell him that it was an emergency.

Tony: He was all, "Well, I can fix it, but it's going to take two, three days." We're like, "We have a show tonight, so we need it fixed right now."

Todd: Welcome back to America.

Rene: I've never been to Canada, so I've never crossed that border, but I've crossed the border from TJ (Tijuana) into the United States too many times. You mentioned that the name of your guys' fanzine was *Fronteras Desarmadas*, and Kiwi mentioned she's from Guatemala. What have been your experiences with borders—not only international borders, but the borders here, within L.A.?

Tony: I guess we named the zine that because, at the time, I was more into immigration reform. We used to have a bass player in our band that didn't have any papers, so he couldn't go anywhere. He couldn't go into Canada. He couldn't even go to Texas.

Todd: Or Arizona.

Rene: You can't go to Sea World. This kid who came into my work asked me and

explained the situation. I'm like, "No. Really. Do not go to Sea World."

Todd: It's bait.

Rene: No Legoland.

Tony: There was nothing he could do. Growing up, he was one of my closest friends. We were stuck to just the West Coast.

Todd: Was it a mutual decision for him to not be in the band?

Tony: Some other stuff happened. He quit. We're able to do whatever now.

Todd: For people who aren't here, Los Angeles is like this big jigsaw puzzle. I can be ten, fifteen miles away from you and be into a lot of the same stuff, know a lot of the same bands, but never meet you. It's just so weird. And there's no animosity. L.A.'s just so big and fractured and isolated.

Tony: The scenes are fractured. You have South Central L.A., which has its own punk scene and bands and you have East L.A. with its own scene and its own bands.

Todd: And there's hostility, too.

Tony: Yeah, there is. Growing up, we couldn't go to shows in East L.A. What would they say?

Kiwi: They'd just claim East L.A. Our group will claim South Central.

Mario: Little cliques.

Tony: I don't know if they could even tell.

Todd: It's obvious that I'm not from there.

Tony: I don't remember how it is how they were able to tell, but maybe they just recognized you as from being on the other side. It's kind of changing, from what I can tell.

Todd: Fingers crossed. I hope it does.

Tony: I lived in East L.A. for a little bit. We used to throw shows at our house. It was called the Crash Pad. We would bring bands all the way from Long Beach, even. But East L.A. is really dominated by high school kids. So they throw shows on Mondays, Tuesdays. They don't care.

Juan: Forty bands.

Kiwi: They asked us to play.

Todd: You're doing no one any favors with that many bands.

Tony: For them, they just want to party.

Todd: True. They just want a soundtrack to the party.

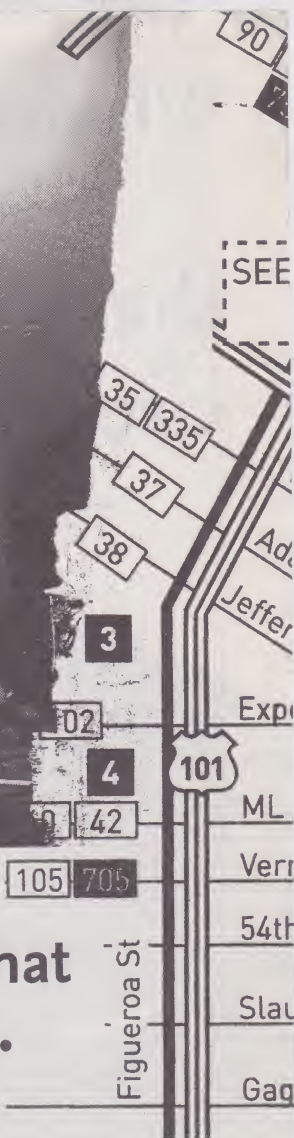
Tony: I don't know if you guys have been to any of these shows in East L.A.

Todd: No, I haven't.

Tony: You should check 'em out. When helicopters come, that's when the circle pit starts. [laughter] In South Central, you'll get the best of both worlds because you'll have



**I'm disconnected from my roots.
But the thing they don't understand is that
the roots are actually Los Angeles roots.
It's not Mexican roots.**



the show and a gang fight in the show. That happens a lot. Seriously.

Rene: The line from one of your tracks, "Estoy Sangrando," is almost that you feel trapped in society which you feel ostracizing. That's a feeling that I, personally, can relate with and I think a lot of Mexican punks can relate to. How would you feel that relates to your band?

Tony: I wrote that song because, a while back, our band couldn't really play L.A., too much.

Todd: Why's that?

Tony: I guess I have too much conflict with too many people. [The rest of the band laughs.] I get into arguments with people and that's it.

Kiwi: No, it's not that.

Juan: Punk drama.

Kiwi: If you have ideas and opinions and he's not going to agree with you, he's going to tell you, "This is what I think. Respect what I say and I respect what you say." There are certain people who don't agree with that.

Rene: Don't want to hear it.

Kiwi: "Oh, Tony, you're wrong. Let's isolate you and ban GS from playing L.A."

Tony: For me, I've always said, if we have a problem, you can just tell me we have a

problem. But a lot of people, they're all, "I don't wanna fight. I'd rather not have that conflict." They avoid conflict and, instead, it just damages the friendship or relationship that you once had. That happened to me often, actually. We can talk it out most of the time. It's not a big deal. So that's what the song's about. People—they want to run us out of town—but they really can't.

Rene: In those circumstances, what were the main ideals you felt were clashing with other people's ideals?

Tony: Some people felt they wanted to control a certain thing, a certain part of L.A., maybe a certain scene or territory. They wanted to make sure they were the ones who were doing everything in the eyes of the whole punk community. "Well, this is what's going down and I'm the head of it." I was not for that. I've always been more about opening up to other things. It's hard to explain without giving too much detail.

Todd: It doesn't sound community-friendly. Let's put it that way.

Rene: Getting it done, in general.

Tony: You mean, down there?

Todd: You're right. It's really complex and layered. You want punk available to people who you think would appreciate it. And I

understand having it somewhat exclusive to the point where you don't want the cops automatically showing up. You don't want a bunch of knuckleheads rolling in and fucking the place up. You want it to be, "Hey, we're going to have a party. We're going to have friends. We're going to have a good time. Other people are invited," but it's a hard balance because sometimes it can explode or implode. I've seen it many times in L.A.

Tony: Well, in South Central, it always explodes because you always have knuckleheads show up, no matter what. It's kind of hard to explain. You want to keep everybody in the back because you don't want to attract any cops. They don't care. They're not really there for the music. They're just there to party and do whatever. Drugs. You get all those problems. That's just how it goes.

Todd: I'm just disappointed that, so many times, it happens within the punk community; that people want to be the policemen of the punk community.

Tony: Yeah, there's a lot of that.

Todd: There are a lot of power struggles.

Tony: It's weird, because when I got into punk, I got into it because I thought it wasn't going to be like that, but, right

When helicopters
come,
that's when the
circle pit starts.



9:02
9:14
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9:45

now, it feels like I'm in high school again. What happened?

Todd: High school sucked the first time around. I do not want to go back.

Tony: Yeah. You have your cool kids in the scene and you have your losers, I guess.

Todd: Or the others, the ostracized.

Tony: Exactly. It's pretty annoying. You gotta get over that. That's really stupid.

Rene: More than one of your songs refers to horrifically crushing boredom. I moved to L.A. about a year ago and I occasionally feel so bored that I want to run outside of my room. You run outside. "Oh shit. There's nothing out here. I want to go home." [laughter] So, anyway, how bored are you guys, even as you cultivate your own punk scene, in a space that you're creating, how much of that boredom is still crushing you, enraging you? How does it affect your music and your life?

Tony: I'm pretty restless. I think that's what it is. I still get bored. One time, for example, I was telling Kiwi, "Let's just stay in today. It's Sunday. We don't need to do anything today." Then four hours later, "I can't. I got to go out and run." I can't sit still. I like to travel. Really, we're kind of spoiled because L.A. is big.

Todd: It's like three hundred towns put together.

Tony: Yeah. There's so much to do, but I often find myself thinking, "What do we do today?"

Todd: It's overwhelming. I grew up in a small, desert community of twelve thousand, so when the town ended, it fucking ended. There's nothing around. In Los Angeles, it tripped me out. I cross a street, I'm in another town? That doesn't make any sense to me. Geographically, L.A. doesn't make any sense. Streets and towns don't just go north, south, east, west, they kinda zig zag around. Highland Park's a triangle.

Tony: It's hard to not be bored when you don't have any money. I'm super broke.

Rene: That's what I was telling Todd. Because if you're in L.A. I just moved here from TJ a year ago. Friends ask, "How's the beach?" "Dude, do you know how much time it would take me to get to the goddamn beach on the Metro and how broke I am? By the time I get there, I'd look at it and be like, "Alright." Then it would take three hours to get home.

Todd: The Green Line dumps you off a mile-and-a-half from the beach.

Rene: You're not only physically isolated, you're financially isolated. The farther you get out of your neighborhood, the farther you get out of "where do I know where I can actually eat with five dollars?"

Tony: That's true. That's pretty much how it is. We don't have the money to do a lot of stuff. We live fifteen minutes from the beach, but even that. The gas, then parking. Then, if you are hungry, you don't have any money for that, either.

Rene: So that boredom and those circumstances together light the fire that you need to create the space and this music and your artistic expression. You have to

keep yourself busy... because it's boring out there.

Tony: South Central's kind of like a suburb, similar to Highland Park, I would say. We're far from the city right now, technically. We're not walking distance.

Todd: We're five, five-and-a-half miles from downtown.

Tony: Similar thing with us. We're probably the same distance away.

Todd: You're like an urban island. People don't believe me, but Highland Park is a small town in a big city. Like what Rene was saying, the transit system's okay, locally. Rene's going to try to go to Brea (in Orange County). It's forty miles away and four hours on the buses... How do you think that money's a factor in the band? Do you think about it every day? For instance, it bothers me when people intentionally wreck their instruments when they're playing. It's the "punk" thing to do, to smash something.

Tony: No, it's not.

Todd: I understand if your drum head's about to go...

Tony: Oh, I've done that before with a guitar head.

Todd: But, how conscientious are you about that? I also think that it's important to save up and get the equipment that you want and know you're going to use for a long time, instead of just having crappy shit that falls apart all the time.

Tony: With the head, one time we played a show and it wouldn't work. It had broken already, twice, so I kicked it and it flew off the cab and this guy freaked out, "Dude, is that my head?" I was like, "No, it's mine." "Okay." We got rid of that head. We traded it on Craigslist for another head. Then I traded that head for another head. Then I sold that head and cab for that small combo amp that I use now.

Todd: You like it?

Tony: Yeah, but it's going out so now I need something else. But, pretty much, you save your money to get something else. It takes a long time.

Todd: Do you think you're more resourceful because of it?

Tony: Well, he probably is because your shit sucks. [laughter]

Mario: He doesn't like the guitar I'm using because it's noisy. We use used stuff. Our pedals are used.

Tony: Kiwi's drums have no legs.

Kiwi: I just bought the drums.

Juan: Ha, ha. No legs!

[laughter]

Tony: We just put a cinder block in front of it. Juan's head has no inputs, but he doesn't care because he plays bass, so he thinks it doesn't matter. He doesn't care if you can't hear him or not. [laughter]

Juan: I'm like Sid Vicious. These guys unplug me all the time anyway.

Todd: You're just the eye candy back there.

Tony: He's the sexy one.

Juan: I just make these guys look sexy. [laughter]

Tony: When it comes to money, the only

thing we worry about is when it comes to touring. We're about to leave to Europe in a few months and we have no money. We keep saying we're going to save, but we don't. This guy comes with six-packs every day.

Mario: Not even.

Tony: It's a thousand for the flight, thousand for the trip, per person. I think we have the money for the airline tickets right now, but we're going to wing it once we're there. Eat grass.

Juan: Eat shit, too.

Tony: We've got to pay the driver a hundred Euros a day, plus our gas. We added it up. If the show's five Euros. We just need twenty people there to pay the driver and that's it. Twenty-five to thirty people, that'll pay the gas, also.

Juan: Hopefully people know of us over there.

Tony: They played us on the French radio, from what I know. I get emails from over there all the time. Our record just came out in Germany. It came out in France.

Todd: Your first record came out in France, right?

Tony: Yeah, the 7".

Todd: How did that happen?

Tony: For some reason, people from Europe hit me up more often than people from the U.S.A. Jon from Symphony of Destruction in France, he hit me up and said, "Hey, I really like your band. Can I put it on vinyl?" I said, "Sure." Then he released it over there. It was not a lot, like 150 copies. Then he re-pressed it because he didn't like the sound, so he re-pressed it into a 12" format.

Todd: Wider grooves, 45.

Tony: Yeah. It was a 45 because the 7" was a 33. Then Ron from Bakersfield (Going Underground) pressed the LP (*Con La Muerte a Tu Lado*). He's super cool. And then now Flo and Jon in Germany and France are going to press the Euro version of that. We're also making a split with Catholic Spit. MMM Discos from San Francisco.

Todd: You've got the wheels on the bus.

Juan: We're working on a new one, too. New songs.

Tony: Second LP. We're almost done with it. **Todd:** Wow. That's great.

Tony: I like to joke that we're the hardest working band that I know.

Todd: Nothing wrong with hustling this way.

Tony: You're juggling your family and your work. It's kind of hard.

Juan: I'm having a son in November. I'm taking off in December.

Todd: Be really kind.

Tony: I didn't even see it on Facebook or anything like that.

Juan: I sent him a text.

Tony: I'm hiking and he's all like, "Hey, I'm still down for the band, alt. I'm a hundred percent still committed. Don't worry about it." I was like, "What are you talking about?" "You didn't see the picture?" He sends me a picture of the ultrasound.

Todd: "I'm pregnant. Ta-da!"

Tony: I remember thinking, "Nah, he's lying."

Rene: "Stop drinking!"

Juan: "I don't have a TV. That's why."



VINCENT MEDINA

**“Don’t park past that tree because
you’re gonna get your car stolen.”**

Rene: Speaking of "I don't have a TV. That's why," which is a directly translated Spanish to English joke. "*Es que no tenemos una tele.*" A lot of stuff in your lyrics is translated directly from English to Spanish, like "With friends like these, who needs enemies?" "*Con amigos como estos, ¿quién necesita enemigos?*"—phrases that just don't exist in Spanish. Do you write the songs in English then translate them to Spanish or do you write them first in Spanish?

Tony: I write them straight to Spanish.

Rene: How do you feel that's affected you lyrically? Do you enjoy plays on words? Do you lyrically enjoy punk in Spanish, like Eskorbuto—does it hit a little harder than, for example, punk in English, just because words you grew up with hit a little closer to home?

Tony: Well, definitely, it's weird because I was born in Los Angeles. I was raised in Los Angeles, so I don't speak Spanish, like Mexican Spanish. I speak Los Angeles Spanish, kind of a Spanglish. I was just saying the other day, "quitar" is a word.

Rene: It's not a word—oh I understand.

Kiwi: "You know, like 'quit.'" I told him, "I've never heard that."

Rene: "*Subete al bus.*" You know, "El bus." Also, not a word. I do the same thing you guys do all the time. My wife makes so much fun of me because I'm like, "*Como te fue en la librería?*" And she's like, "*Es la biblioteca.*" I'm like, "It's the library. Library/librería. C'mon. They've got libros in there. You know what I'm talking about." But you guys do that stuff in your lyrics, too. You don't say, "*Piensas en el suicidio.*" ("You think about suicide") you say, "*Piensas en suicida.*" That's how my nieces speak. So you're clearly aware of the fact that you're doing it. You're owning it. You're embracing it. I was born in L.A., too, but I moved to TJ when I was twelve and so all of my punk rock upbringing was around punk and Spanish and being told, "You're an idiot because you don't speak Spanish properly."

Tony: In Spanish class in school, they would tell us, "Don't speak Spanish with other kids."

Kiwi: "That's slang."

Tony: "You're going to learn dirty Spanish from them."

Kiwi: We thought we spoke really perfect Spanish.

Tony: So that's how we write the lyrics.

Todd: You have "ke" for "que"—"porke" for "por que."

Tony: That's something we've always done. Just "ke"s. We know it's "que..."

Todd: I didn't know if it was a neighborhood thing or a slang thing.

Rene: It's a ponk thing. P-O-N-K thing. Barrio. [laughter] How much of that contributed to your feeling of isolation? Because, growing up, it's a really strange thing. White people think, "Oh, you're cool. Why are you trying to act white? Just go and be with Mexican people. But

Mexican people are like, "Why are you trying to act Mexican? You're clearly not Mexican. You're white." So you're stuck in this weird spot. You'll never be Mexican enough for Mexican people, but you'll never be white enough for white people. So there's this thing called punk where everyone's supposed to be accepted and then you show up to a punk show and then you're like, "Wait. I'm not pretty or white. Or, we're in this corner? Okay, cool." There's a lot of bullshit.

Tony: It's the same deal with us. I grew up the same way. I used to go to TJ with my Dad every weekend because all of our family used to live in TJ. Most of them now live over here. My grandma still lives over there. My aunt still lives over there. But we'd go over there and I'd play soccer with the kids every weekend and they'd all tell me the same thing. "Just go back. You're not from here."

Rene: "What the hell is soccer?"

Mario: Fútbol!

Tony: I was the goalie.

Rene: So you felt that in L.A. as well. Just everywhere, in general, in terms of feeling ostracized ethnically even within your own culture and also within the home culture.

Tony: I don't identify as Mexican. I identify myself as Chicano. I think L.A. has its own culture and I'm definitely from that culture. I'm not from Mexican culture. I'm not from white culture. I don't fit in with any white people. I don't fit in with any real Mexican people, either. Although, probably, if I had to choose, I could fit in more with the Mexican people, obviously.

Todd: Is that where the term "*pocho*" comes from?

Tony and Kiwi: Yeah. I get that all the time.

Tony: A *pocho* is something that's disconnected from its source. Basically, it's I'm disconnected from my roots. But the thing they don't understand is that the roots are actually Los Angeles roots. It's not Mexican roots.

Kiwi: The same thing happens to me because I was born in Guatemala, but I was raised here. So they're, "You're Guatemalan, so you know this and that." I'm like, "Sorry." Then they're like, "Oh, you're from Nicaragua." I'm like, "Yeah, but... I can't... I'm sorry."

Todd: I think, in a lot of ways, L.A. is its own planet. Not only are there three hundred towns, it's so many ethnicities. I think there are over 150 ethnic groups that have their own neighborhoods. Monterey Park is highly Asian. Armenian in Glendale. You have to be a stone-cold racist to hate L.A. because there's just so many different races.

Tony: But, definitely, it gets more difficult when you have two different ethnic cultures living in the same neighborhood.

Todd: A lot of tension.

Tony: Where we live, it's mostly Black and Hispanic. Growing up, there was all kinds of stuff always happening. It was even worse for us because we dress punk.

Todd: So that's another overlay of the culture, too.

Tony: It's like another culture on top of another culture.

Juan: Everyone thinks that just because I'm from Orange County that I live in a nice neighborhood. I probably live in a worse neighborhood than they do.

Todd: In what way?

Juan: The housing, the community. A lot of people think, "Oh, you're from Orange County, you must be rich. You must have money." If I do have money, it's because I work for it.

Todd: There's no shame in getting paid for hard work. It's called the middle class.

Kiwi: He has tattoos. [to Tony] Show him your tattoos.

Tony: I got a Joey Ramone. Pretty good, right.

Todd: It looks like him. That's the biggest part.

Mario: When I used to live in the Valley, Tony was in Rayos X. I had a band that used to play with them. La Voz. I used to get, "Oh, he's from the Valley. He has money." Like that. I was dressed kind of like a skater.

Todd: It's funny what the preconceptions are because there are almost always bad parts of towns.

Mario: I feel weird, coming over here, to play shows. You don't feel accepted. You're like, "What the hell, dude?" I'm here to play. I'm one of you guys.

Todd: "I'm in the band."

Juan: It's all the Anaheim/L.A. hate.

Todd: There's a huge division between Orange County and Los Angeles.

Tony: That was definitely part of it. I remember the first time I was in Rayos Xs, we went to go play Santa Ana the first time, which right now is awesome. We showed up and some kids were like, "Fuck L.A." and they broke—not our tape—the tape for another band playing.

Todd: Whoops.

Tony: It was just dumb.

Todd: It's almost like sports teams, in a way.

Tony: Kinda. Yeah.

Todd: It's the difference between being prideful of where you're from. I'm really prideful of being from Highland Park, but it's not prejudice against other people. I want to show you cool shit in my neighborhood. It's tough being a nice person sometimes.

Tony: Even within close proximity. East L.A., South L.A.

Todd: We have the Arroyo Seco and the L.A. River, and those are two huge dividing lines and people really change after those. The lines seem arbitrary, but it's true. South Pasadena's a totally different beast than Highland Park.

Tony: Is there a scene there?

Todd: No, no. Just going there is kinda weird. I don't feel comfortable there.

Tony: Neither do we.

Juan: Tony, the first time I went to his band practice, he told me, "Don't park past that tree because you're gonna get your car stolen."

Tony: It's true.



I like to prove people wrong.

Todd: A lot of the Latino and Chicano culture, as a whole, can be pretty macho/machismo. Kiwi—have there been any really direct things where people have been offensive to you? Do you find it difficult or empowering?

Juan: Every time we play a show, they don't believe she's in the band.

Todd: Really?

Kiwi: They stamp everybody.

Juan: [caveman bouncer voice] "Are you really in the band?"

Todd: Can you do a drum roll on their arm or something with your sticks?

Kiwi: No. One time, we had a show and the security guy, he stamped everybody and he wouldn't let me in. He's like, "No, you're not in the band." I'm like, "Yeah. I play the drums." He's like, "No. Liar." "No, I play in the band." Tony's all, "No. She plays in the band." The security guy's like, "I better see you play."

Juan: It happened in Canada, too?

Todd: Really? Nice Canada? Damn it. Did the security guard say anything after you played?

Kiwi: After I played, he came up to me. He gave me props and, "Oh, free beer," and all that stuff. I like to prove people wrong. That's the thing. I'm not going to go fight about it. "Oh, you asshole." No. I'm going to show you that I can do it and then prove you wrong.

Todd: By example.

Kiwi: That's the best way I can answer.

Todd: I call that the "Fuck You By Example."

Kiwi: Yeah. But I get it all the time. All the time.

Todd: God, it's 2013. You'd think that shit would go away.

Tony: As for the rest of us, when it comes to the machismo stuff, one time, joking around, my brother said to my dad something along the lines of, "Oh what a pretty daughter you have." But that was the only thing and it was whatever. My Dad has always said, "You're different. I don't like it, but I respect that."

Todd: It could be worse. It could be better.

Tony: He's cool about it, though.

Todd: What is your personal vision of success for the band? What would be some of the criteria?

Tony: When we talk about success within ourselves, in the band, we've always just said, "Let's just be the Ramones." Before our shows sometimes, we'll watch Ramones videos on YouTube. It'll get us all pumped.

Todd: It's your inspiration. You're testifying.

Tony: We gotta do that. Pack a stadium. Play really quick. Sometimes when we play shows, we try to play them back-to-back-to-back, the songs. We don't stop.

Todd: Have them wanting more at the end, too. Absolutely. Fuckin' pants them and get out.

Tony: We do ten songs in twenty or twenty-two minutes.

Todd: That's what I like.

Tony: We do it really quick. I think that's our idea of success. It'd be nice to be able to just focus on the band and not have a job and not have to worry about that. I know in punk, right now especially, that's taboo.

Todd: I wouldn't really worry about that taboo. I really wouldn't.

Tony: I know it. If you're, like, making money or you're living off your band,

Before our shows sometimes,
we'll watch
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It'll get us all
pumped.



suddenly, you guys aren't punk anymore. You've lost everything.

Todd: The thing I don't understand is that there's a real big difference between self-sustaining as a band and making a fuck ton of money. People think it's a switch. On or off. I think it's a spectrum. Fugazi sold over 500,000 copies. (I guessed way low. *Repeater* itself sold over two million copies.) They did it ethically and they reinvested it, not only in themselves, but the label and the area that they lived in. It's just a lot more difficult. And people who "make it," often develop amnesia of where they came from and don't meaningfully thank the people who got them there.

Tony: I think that's the thing. If you're trying to make something more of yourself than the typical band, here in L.A., it's kind of frowned upon. Any kind of difference, even the way we sound, the way we play is, I guess you could say melodic or slower, even. Everything else in L.A. is faster, like crust or raw punk or something along those lines. So, when we started, everything was frowned upon.

Todd: For me, you're tapping into a rich musical heritage. I really like Masshysteri. There's this other Swedish band, Vånna Inget—really, really good. I don't know if you know this Polish band, El Banda. Awesome. Male/female vocal interchanges. Really dark and icy, stuff like *The Estranged* and *Daylight Robbery*, too. There's a definite thread going through it, but it's spread out.

Tony: I think we personally believe we don't really sound like Masshysteri or any of those bands.

Todd: The approach. The speed. More atmosphere. It sounds like you're painting with a black brush instead of a white brush. You're filling in the darkness.

Juan: A lot of the shows, after we play, a lot of people say, "You guys sound like the Mexican Vicious." [laughter]

Todd: "Thank you." Then I think that's evidence that you're paving your own path, which is the most respectable part, sonically, as a band. There are influences all over the place—like the Ramones—but you're not beholden to them. Last

question. Do you think that punk saved your life?

Tony: I think it saved my life, definitely.

Kiwi: Yeah.

Juan: Yeah. I would be gang banging.

Mario: Probably, me too.

Tony: I grew up with a bunch of skaters. We all got into punk together. Out of all of them, I'm the only one not in jail. They slowly went to some other stuff. I made a band. They didn't and that's what happened.

Kiwi: I don't think I was ever pressured to be in a gang.

Todd: That's good.

Tony: Kiwi's just Kiwi. She's just herself. Whole. She's just one.

[Kiwi laughs]



AND STEVE ADAMYK

MARC GÄRTNER

BAND STEVE ADAM

Interview by **Patrick McEachnie**

Photos by **Marc Gärtner**
Kelsey Hoffman
(Flickr: NeutronGirl)

Art Junk by **Amy Adoyzie**

Steve Adamyk Band is the semi-solo project of—yeah, you guessed it—Steve Adamyk. Formerly of Million Dollar Marxists and Sedatives, Steve's solo-turned-group project gained traction in Germany—thanks to labels such as P. Trash, Red Lounge, and Taken By Surprise before spreading throughout North America. Steve Adamyk became the Steve Adamyk Band following the band's first few 7"s when it became increasingly clear that, as a group, it was making progress and turning heads of listeners throughout Canada and Europe. A few key members have stuck it out for the long haul, while the rest of the rotating lineup features various musicians from Ottawa and Montreal's finest acts.

Steve Adamyk Band plays a version of punk paved by the Dead Boys and early Elvis Costello And The Attractions, along with influences from more modern bands such as Marked Men, The Briefs, and Jay Reatard. Ottawa has become a hotbed of punk and garage, with Steve Adamyk at the helm of this movement—despite his humble nature.

I stumbled upon the original P. Trash Records pressing of the band's first LP, which served as a reminder to me that Ontario (specifically Toronto and Ottawa) had not lost their once-strong connection to hook-driven punk rock ala Teenage Head, The Diodes, and The Mods. It's just that it's now being routed through Germany. Steve Adamyk Band may have opened the floodgates for the international acclaim that southern and central Ontario has received in the last few years, but there's a reason they've consistently remained at the forefront. It counts and has counted many of the best musicians and punk songwriters offered by Ottawa and Montreal. The band members cut their teeth on past projects—some notable, some swept under the rug. They've toured for months straight in their younger days and are now ready to take a more calculated approach.

Steve Adamyk Band releases finally became available in North America once domestic labels wised up to their energetic live show, perfectly crafted songs, and your-new-best-friend approachability.

The band made its American debut in 2012 with the sophomore LP *Forever Won't Wait* on Portland's Dirtnap Records. That was followed by the third LP in early 2013 for the same label, aptly titled *Third*.

Featuring current and past members of Crusades, Mother's Children, Pregnancy Scars, Sonic Avenues, and the other half of Ottawa bands, I now introduce... Steve Adamyk Band.

Steve Adamyk: guitar/vocals
Davey Quesnelle: guitar/vocals
Sebastien Godin: bass/vocals
Dave Forcier: drums

Patrick: Settle a bet for a number of people. How do you pronounce Adamyk?

Steve: It's pronounced "Adam-ick." As in, the name "Adam" followed by "ick." Maybe closer to "A-DUH-MICK" when said quickly. Not, "A-DAMN-ICK" as is commonly spoken. To me, the whole thing is funny, because it was never an issue of mispronunciation when I was growing up. Maybe my parents spoke to my teachers in school first, or something.

Patrick: I feel your pain, coming from another hard-to-pronounce name for many. How do you have so much time to write, record, and release as many records as you do, while maintaining a relationship and a job?

Steve: It's actually not as time-consuming as one would think, to be honest. Most of the time, I end up thinking about all the time I *didn't* spend on the band, when I was off doing whatever else. Point being, if it were totally up to me, we'd be doing even more.

We're only playing about forty shows a year, give or take, and recording an average of fifteen songs annually. To some, I suppose that might seem like a lot, but when your songs are two minutes long, I feel like we could push it further. Eventually, we'll be having kids, money will be tighter, and the band will have even less freedom than we do now. So, the way I see it, we need to do as much as we can while the time and resources are still there. If it wasn't for the excessive visa restrictions, we'd be on tour in the USA a lot more as well, I can tell you that much. It makes it almost impossible at times.

Patrick: You mention the introduction of children as something that will affect the band. Is that something coming down the pipe pretty soon?

Steve: Hey, unless I'm shootin' blanks, I'd say it's just matter of time. Sooner rather than later, actually. You see, I actually found a woman willing to marry and share a bed with me, so, I figure that's half the battle.

Patrick: I've read some of your past interviews where you've said that you're able to release so many albums because many of your songs have been bouncing around your head for years. How close are you to draining that bank?

Steve: I hope it doesn't happen anytime soon! That said, even on the first couple of releases, the "better" songs, in my opinion, were brand new songs we'd just written. It's not as though every track I pull is ten years old. But, yeah, a few are, oddly enough.

With that in mind, if the songs aren't there, we just won't record. We'll wait until we have them ready. At least, that's how we're working now. For the first couple of releases, I was writing the night before going into the studio, with lyrics to follow a month after the bed tracks.

Patrick: What's the difference between a song that makes the cut and one that doesn't? Any notable parts that are key to a good song?

Steve: I actually pride myself on the art of writing punk lyrics that aren't cliché. I'm not saying I'm that successful at it, but I'm trying.

I tend to write off bands that don't put effort into their lyrics, so I apply the same standard to my own—I'm not saying every track has to be serious and political or something—it's treading the fine line between the two poles that's the challenge.

Patrick: You continue to return to The Meatlocker to record all your material with Yogi Granger. Why?

Steve: Yogi is solid for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, he's a good friend and acts more as a producer than any other engineer would. You know, making you do more vocal takes if he doesn't think they're up to scruff. Also, he's extremely affordable and understands what we're going for, which is difficult to find sometimes. Similar to music, he's heavily involved in the community around it. He's a real rare human being. If you were someone he didn't know very well, but told him you had a keen interest in recording or pinball, he takes time to have a one-on-one with you and show you the ropes. He's just a swell guy all around.

Patrick: You've had what seems to be a revolving door of members since you've started. How did the first lineup come together?

Steve: Dave Williams agreed to help me out with the initial record; it was never intended to be a live band at first.

Patrick: No live band? Why not?

Steve: It simply wasn't something that was approached. Sedatives had just called it quits and I knew that Dave and Emmanuel had plans to start Crusades, so I didn't want to put pressure on Dave to commit or deal with the rejection of someone saying no. He probably would have said yes if I had asked him, but I wanted to start slow and work from there. I can be a humble guy when it comes down to it—at times I suck at approaching or bugging people to help me out. Shy or whatever. It's a fault, actually.

Patrick: Humble. How about the rotating aspect of the lineup?

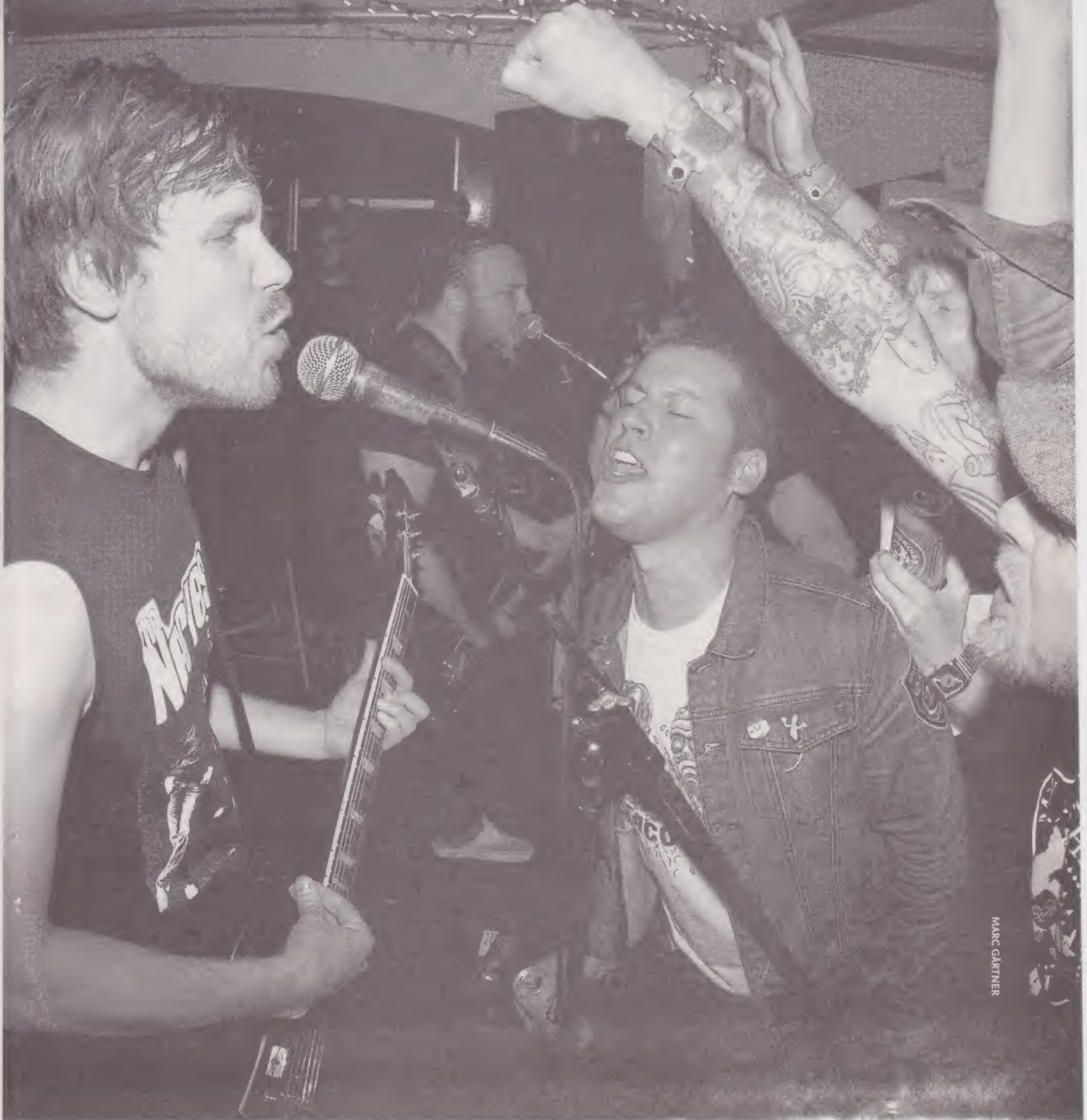
Steve: Davey Quesnelle came in to help out as well at one point. After we listened to the songs, everyone agreed that it'd be fun to play a few shows. What started out as a three-piece quickly turned to a foursome, when Emmanuel offered to play second guitar after one of our early shows—which was funny, because that made it three-quarters of Sedatives, our previous band.

Patrick: Tell me about the Sedatives and why it ultimately ended.


Steve: Sedatives were a band that constantly struggled with personality and artistic creativity, even though the majority of us were already great friends. The band brought us even closer together, which is the astounding part. By the time we called it quits, we were at the top of our game, both as a band and as friends. We had overcome a lot of major personality issues we had in the beginning. There were a few isolated incidents when we were in Europe that put a member or two off. So, by the time we got home, that was it.

It didn't occur to some of us—me—for a while after the fact, but soon enough we knew that the book had been closed on us

WE DIDN'T FIGHT FOR IT. WE RELEASED RECORDS
AND WE SAID, "HEY, HERE'S OUR RECORD,"
AND THAT WAS THAT.



MARC GARTNER



MANY "SCHOOL NIGHTS" WERE SPENT GETTING LOADED AT LOCAL BARS. GOING TO SEE BANDS.

for good. I was the only one left fucking furious. Dave and Emmanuel had already started talking about forming the band that would end up being Crusades, and White Wires had just started picking up steam for Ian, so they weren't overly concerned with Sedatives ending.

Patrick: So they were well on their way to finding a replacement for Sedatives, or, I guess, just a new musical project.

Steve: That was ultimately what made me so anxious to start playing music again—I had catching up to do. Of course, Dave and Emmanuel ended up playing with me for a few years, but I waited for both of them to let me know they wanted to be involved before I approached them myself, at least when it comes to the live band. I guess I assumed they wouldn't want to be involved, or were at least too concerned about being shot down. It all came out well in the end, though. So, I'm grateful for it.

Patrick: So you've got this lineup both in the studio and playing a few shows. How long does that last for?

Steve: That lineup lasted about a year and a half, getting through our first Euro tour, SXSW, and some Ontario shows. Eventually, Dave Williams's wife was expecting, and he and Emmanuel had just recently formed Crusades, so they chose to pare down the amount of bands they play in. Which makes sense—Crusades is their baby, not to mention one hell of a band. Dave Forcier joined in

Williams's stead, with Emmanuel lasting for another chunk of shows promoting *Forever Won't Wait* with us, until Seb from Sonic Avenues came in to fill the slot permanently.

Patrick: Okay, now tell me a little about Million Dollar Marxists.

Steve: Million Dollar Marxists were some of the best and worst times I've had in my life. Essentially, we were a young band that practiced 'til we bled. We got tight and were ready to conquer the world. Only problem was we—well, I—made a lot of rookie mistakes. We wanted it so bad, we did literally everything we could think of. We spent every fathomable penny, called in every resource, quit our jobs, and went on tour forever. You can imagine how that turned out. I think the mid-2000s were a weird time for music. As a band, we were stuck in the middle of it, changing our sound pretty drastically halfway through our existence as a band. Some people got it, but a lot didn't. We did have some success, some of which is the best I've had to date, but we eventually crashed and burned.

Anyway, my point is, with Steve Adamyk Band—as well as a lot of other bands I mentioned that spawned from Sedatives/Marxists—we didn't fight for it. We released records and we said, "Hey, here's our record," and that was that. You know, we waited for people to come us rather than badgering the whole world.

It wasn't even a planned method of attack. We merely knew no one was willing to quit their lives and go on tour indefinitely.

Luckily, for all of us, people started reaching out. I remember a few years back talking to Luke from White Wires/Marxists and saying to him, "What the fuck! Why didn't we do this all along?"

Patrick: Have you ever been featured on any Canadian national press, like the radio charts or television?

Steve: We've had some exposure with both. Normally, for Canadians, it's much easier to get on national radio and television because of the Canadian Content Law, which, by law, says that broadcasting has to feature at least thirty-five percent Canadian artists. However, we're still a punk band, and a punk band still has to compete with indie bands and other trendy music more palatable to the masses. So, yeah, we're better off in Ottawa than say, a city in the U.S., but it can still be tough.

Luckily, our scene—beyond the punk scene—is really supportive of all genres. It's a lot less aggressive than other major Canadian markets. That being said, I know a lot of bands that have received jack shit support from the Canadian media. It all depends who you talk to, I guess. One day, it might help our audience on a national level, but that hasn't happened yet.

Patrick: What's the secret to becoming huge in Germany?

Steve: Go there and play! Everyone is extremely friendly and genuinely interested in music. Just like anything else, it's a matter of getting out and doing it.



AND JUST BEING COMPLETELY NUTS.

Patrick: Who reached out to you from Germany? I'm sure someone had to show interest before you knew to tour there.

Steve: Peter from P. Trash Records was the first to reach out to us. Mainly because of his relationship with Statues, who were kind enough to plug Sedatives to him. Our relationship essentially grew from there. Statues and Brutal Knights paved the way for the Canadian onslaught that would come a few years later from Germany.

Patrick: It seems like a lot of Canadian bands gain traction in Germany before they do outside their own province. You've done fairly large European tours twice, both with Sonic Avenues. Can you tell me what that was like? How are European shows different from Canadian and American?

Steve: Our bands have consistently returned to tour the EU because it's simply the only touring that we've been capable of doing for a long time. The crowds are great, the shows themselves are easily obtainable, bands are treated well, gear is easily rented. I mean, don't get me wrong; we'd love more than anything to tour North America back and fourth, but it just isn't feasible most of the time.

Crossing the border is such a nightmare for Canadians. Thousands of dollars in fees, contracts months in advance, and then they can still make you turn around and go home if they feel it fit. It's ridiculous. The last U.S. tour we did, we had to fly in, rent a vehicle,

borrow, buy gear and merch—all for eight shows. We had a blast, but no one is raking in the dough here. We do it because we love it. Simple as that.

Patrick: Do you have any major regrets on naming the band after yourself? I imagine it gets pretty difficult to make up stories to get past the border when the band name is right on your passport.

Steve: Completely regretful, at least when it comes to that aspect. We've played over a dozen shows in the U.S. thus far. However, we don't have much of a choice other than doing it one hundred percent legit at this point—which is tough and expensive. It's really hard to explain this to a lot of people we talk to. It's like, "Come play our city!" and our response is, "We can't." All people hear is the word "No." Very few understand or relate. If we were to get caught lying, we'd be banned for seven years right off the bat. That's a death sentence for any non-American musician. In short, costs don't get covered and we go into debt to play for people. We're still going to do it, just selectively.

Patrick: You've played just over a dozen U.S. shows in almost four years—but you played that many in Germany alone on your last European tour. Even your Canadian dates tend to be pretty spread out and sporadic. What problems do you see touring Canada?

Steve: We don't tour across our own country for the most part. We have to stick by the same ideology, fly-ins and playing as much as we can

within driving distance. The rest of the country is too spread out and with gas prices through the roof; it just isn't worth it a lot of the time. In a nutshell, because, like everyone else in the world, we work and have to tour around our vacation time, so we need to pick our battles wisely. That said, we're making a point of hammering the world in 2014, so stay tuned on that.

Patrick: So, what are you doing for money to subsidize touring and such?

Steve: I push paper at a law firm. I've actually been employed by them, on and off, for thirteen years. It's honestly helped me through all of my musical endeavors. I'm not even close to having money to burn, but I don't go hungry either. In the current climate, I consider myself lucky for someone who isn't educated at post-secondary level. I couldn't afford to go to university and decided to focus on music instead.

I've also been paid to write from time to time. Back in the late 2000s, I wrote articles for a now-defunct local paper called the *Ottawa Xpress* and managed to do cover stories for bands like Bad Religion, DOA, and The Constantines.

Patrick: You just recently came back for a West Coast tour with Needles/Pins. How did that go?

Steve: You could lock us in a pine box with those guys and we'd be happy as clams. One of the best current bands going today. Seriously, go find everything you can by Needles/Pins.

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Patrick: What's the best part about touring in America rather than Canada?

Steve: Good question! Let's see... better gas prices, cool flavors of chips that aren't available in Canada.

Patrick: What exactly can you get in America, as far as junk food, that you can't get in Canada?

Steve: Bacon flavor—among other strange meat flavor—chips. Plus, tons of Mexican style flavors of chips you'd never see back home. Canadians have piss-poor access to quality Mexican food in general, so hitting up taquerias are pretty much all we ever talk about on the road. Then again, as a culture, they almost completely omit the letter "u."

Patrick: How—based on your touring experiences—are Canada and America similar?

Steve: Both Canada and the U.S. are extremely multicultural nations, but due to population size—Canada is ten times smaller in population—segregation is something that isn't as obvious in Canada. Stereotypically, Canadians pride themselves on being "different" than our southern neighbors, but, to be honest, we're all essentially the same. The national average would probably see Canada as a more liberal nation, but there's a doppelganger for every American archetype in Canada.

Patrick: What about differences between the two?

Steve: The same problems exist in both countries, just on different scales. Canadians party pretty hard, though. So, the Americans we meet find that pretty endearing.

As most Americans are aware, we get the shit taxed out of us up here—which I think is a good thing—so it's honestly fucking awesome to come south of the border and drink, party, and buy records, then be blown away by how much things cost. Our dollar has been strong for the last few years, so buying records in the States is the absolute best for us. The rest of the time, we get screwed on high shipping prices. It all evens out in the end.

Patrick: What kind of problems did you run into during the American tour?

Steve: Gear was an issue. We had to buy/rent/borrow everything. I borrowed a guitar from a really swell friend of mine, but USPS lost it when I tried to mail it back to him. Again, problems that wouldn't exist if the border weren't so much of an issue. Not to mention the vehicle we rented was a complete piece of shit. It took a licking in the mere eight days we had it, but thankfully for insurance, everything was covered.

We love Canada, and are completely "Ottawa Proud," but anyone who says they wouldn't want to live in the Bay Area, L.A.,

Portland, or NYC, at least for a little while, is lying through their goddamn teeth. It's fuckin' cold here in the winter, man!

Patrick: What was it like growing up in Ottawa? I know it doesn't have the reputation that Toronto or Montreal have, but it has seemed to come into its own as of late.

Steve: Being the nation's capital, Ottawa has a reputation for being a really wimpy, government-pillowed city. That's not entirely untrue, but there's a lot going on here, especially of late. The metro area is about a million people, but that's largely inclusive of the suburbs and surrounding townships. I'd equate it to a less-cool Austin, TX.

Patrick: How so?

Steve: It's a lot of students and government, but without all the awesome venues.

Growing up here was great. It was painfully safe and seemingly prosperous. My family wasn't well-off, but we managed to live in a really nice neighborhood and a lot of my friends growing up are ones I still see on the regular today. At the same time, it's still a fairly large city and I was exposed to some pretty real life shit when I was younger—getting mugged and being taken home by the cops.

Culturally speaking, our government provides a lot of funding to artists—however, none of which Adamyk Band been able to access as of yet—and just like any other nation, are vigilantly protective of their cultural rights. A large portion of our country is French-speaking as well, so much so that being uni-lingual can be a fault, at times.

Patrick: How did growing up in Ottawa influence your understanding of punk? Or did it at all?

Steve: Being a "punk" in high school for us wasn't exactly what you'd expect. It was the mid-'90s. Skateboarding dominated everything. Yeah, we had jocks at our school, but they weren't the same kind of cool. Skaters—who all listened to punk—ran the show. There were a few kids with older brothers who showed us tunes they were into at the time, and that was that. It was a complete domino effect. The local record store near our school—Birdman Sound, still one of the best record stores in the country—supplied us all.

After we all got beyond our Fat Wreck Chords stages, a lot of us seemed to dive head first into classic punk, weird grunge—The Cows, AmRep records stuff—and, mainly, '90s garage. It's funny explaining to people that when I was eighteen, my bands of choice were the Dead Boys, The Dictators, The Humpers, and anything/everything on Crypt, Estrus, Sympathy, or Mans Ruin Records. Even though the drinking age in our province

is nineteen, it was enforced significantly less strictly than it is currently.

Many "school nights" were spent when we were seventeen getting loaded at local bars, going to see bands like The Mullens, Gaza Strippers, The BellRays, and Swingin' Neckbreakers and just being completely nuts. I think the bars were just happy that people were coming to the shows. We weren't quite the nerdy punks who got beat up on at all—for that matter, it was quite the opposite. I was always a quieter kid who didn't even skate, but the dudes I hung with were rowdy. Even during our earliest bands' existence, I remember fights breaking out during band practices and shows.

Patrick: One day it seemed people all over the world started to take notice of the Ottawa scene. A lot of people threw out words like "incestuous" and "prolific." What do you think caused this and how true are the assessments?

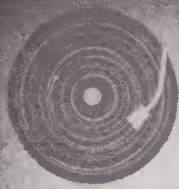
Steve: It's a question that has popped up the last few years to a lot of bands from Ottawa. Honestly, I don't think it can be pinpointed to one event. Ottawa was in a bit of a lull around 2006. A year or two later, everything just seemed to click. There were a lot of new faces and dedicated people who all happened to be roughly the same age. The perfect age, actually. And, I'm not just talking random, "Hey, you play guitar? Let's start a band!" kind of people. I'm talking about people who had already cut their teeth putting out records, going on extensive tours in other bands, and all happened to be looking for something new.

The Sick Fits, Buried Inside, Million Dollar Marxists, and The Creeps were bands that were around previously, and who were all winding down as bands, but still looking for something new—save the Creeps, who have always been around. Plus, these people had new friends. All of a sudden, four old bands turned into fifteen new bands. Then other bands in Ottawa took notice and wanted in as well. This is essentially how the Ottawa Explosion concept came about.

Patrick: What is Ottawa Explosion?

Steve: OXW began as a blog Emmanuel Sayer started in 2008 to plug all the new shows our bands were playing. Ian Manhire from White Wires really wanted to have a fest, so he named it after his label, calling it (Going) GaGa Weekend. This lasted for three years, until Ian decided he wanted to take a step back. Emmanuel took it as an opportunity to keep the train moving by changing the name, but for all intents and purposes was/is the same thing. It's really more than that though—it's a community of bands willing to help each other out, far more than just a

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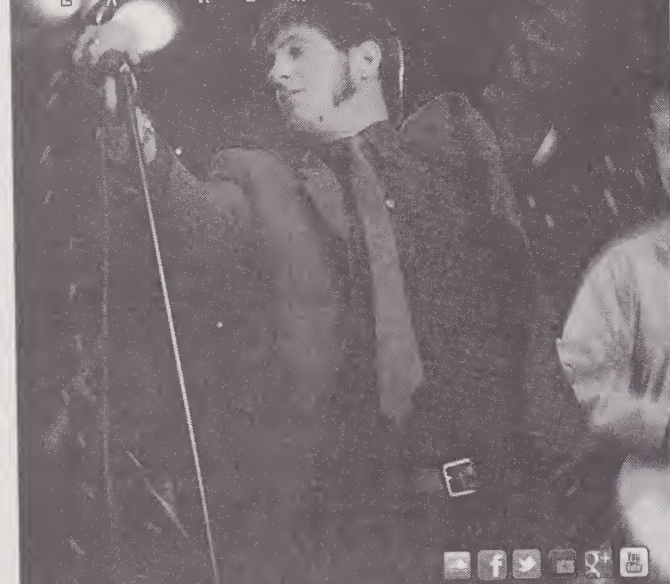
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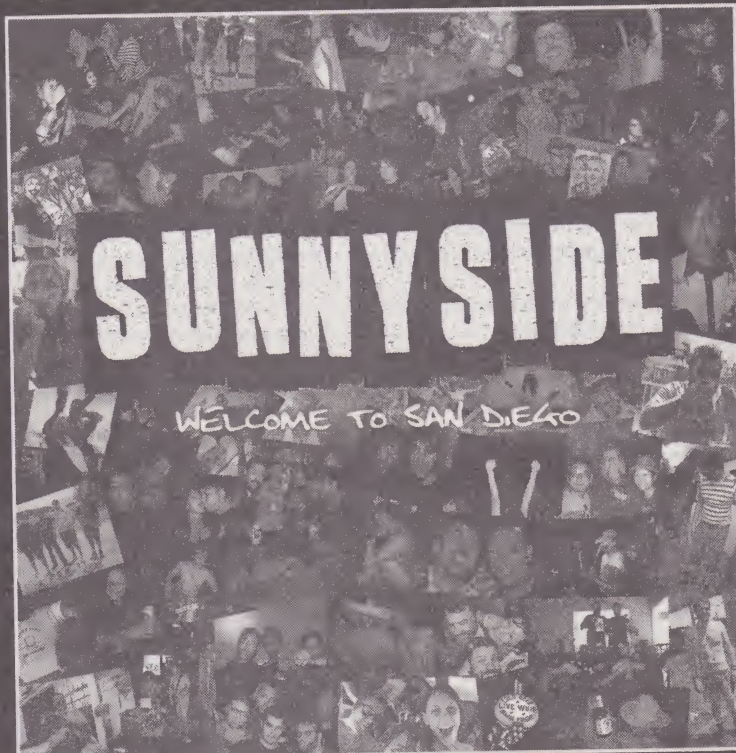
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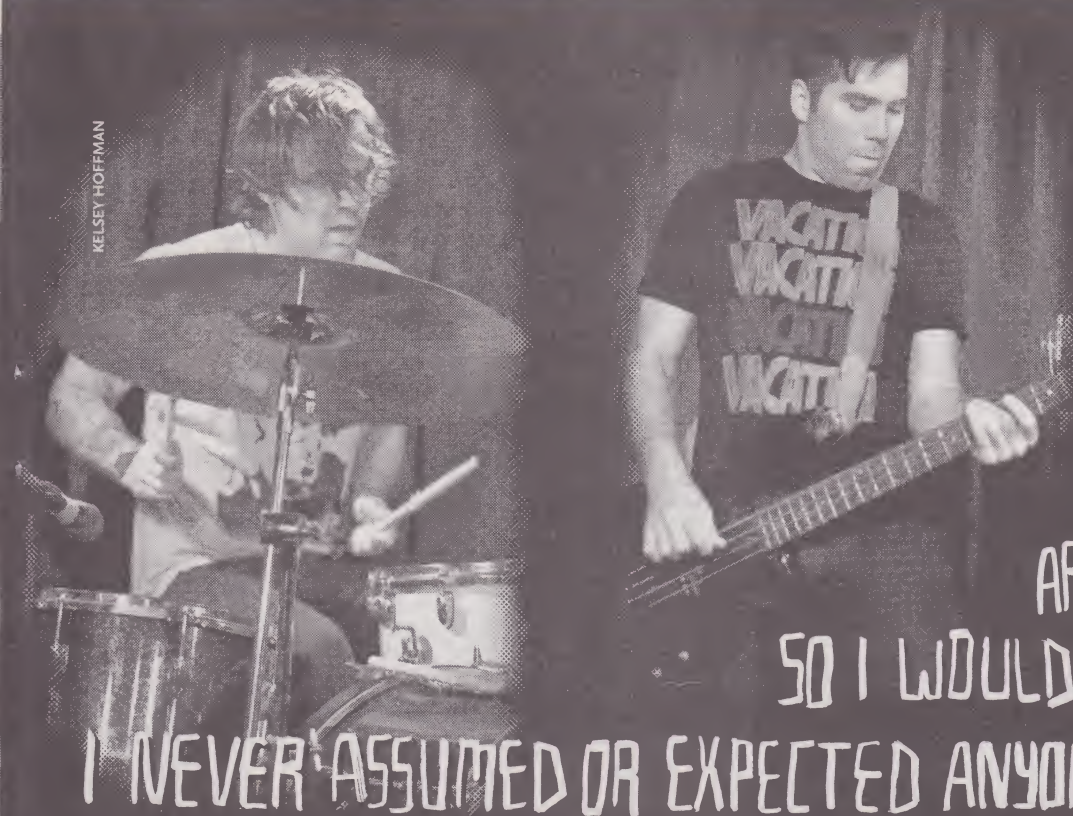
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I STARTED
MAKING
MUSIC TO
APPEASE MYSELF,
SO I WOULDN'T GO INSANE.
I NEVER ASSUMED OR EXPECTED ANYONE WOULD CARE.

“fest.” The Explosion is predominantly punk, but not exclusively.

Patrick: How did the Ottawa scene grow from there?

Steve: Emmanuel from Buried Inside and Luke from Million Dollar Marxists started a DJ/club night called Rock’n’Roll Pizza Party—that had free pizza!—and bands would play once a week. It caught on and grew. There was no shortage of shows, which always seemed to be full. That in combination with Ian Manhire’s Going Gaga Records were the crux of the whole “scene,” if you will.

Patrick: Who’s the best up-and-coming Ottawa band?

Steve: Currently, my favorite and on my “most promising” list are Pregnancy Scares, Voicemail, New Swears, and Big Dick. Mother’s Children are about to finish an album that I’m sure will blow people’s minds. In my opinion, they haven’t received the credit they deserve—which is saying a lot, because they already get attention. The new Crusades record is bound to blow minds, too. But I imagine I’m preaching to the choir here.

Patrick: You’ve had a few CD releases in Japan and have expressed some interest in touring there in the past. Is that something that you can see materializing in the future?

Steve: We’re heading over in May of 2014, actually. Waterside Records from Tokyo have released all of our albums in different formats over there and it seems like people care. So we’re going to make the trek. A lot of our bands have toured Europe and the USA, but we’re the first to head to any Asian country. We really have no idea what to expect.

Patrick: What can you tell me about the *Goodbye California* CD from Lost Cause Records?

Steve: When I was twenty-two, I had some sort of bullshit epiphany that I wanted to put out my own solo album. I saved up and paid for the studio time and CD pressing all on my own and just did it. I didn’t care what anyone thought about it, I didn’t care if anyone actually bought any of the five hundred CDs—which no one did—I manufactured, I just knew it was something I had to get off my chest.

Problem was, I was just as impatient as I was passionate, and I ended up rushing the whole recording process. Musically, the performance was fine, but vocally... yikes. That’s how my mom ended up with boxes of CDs in the storage area of her bridal shop for years to come. It took me another seven or so years to give it another shot. I’ve only recently started selling them again, mainly because I’ve been getting so many questions and harassed about it, but it will never be repressed or made available online. Why? It’s not very good!

Patrick: What have you learned from the mistakes you made on that first solo CD?

Steve: I learned that you can’t rush everything. There are plenty of things that are time sensitive in a band, but as bad as you want it, you can never rush a product. That said, there’s a fine line between taking your sweat-ass time and doing so, too. Vocally speaking, I can’t say it was anything intentional. I just kept doing it. I suppose it changed, but that’s probably just a combination of experience together with aging. I wish I could say otherwise, but that’s really all there is to it.

Back when I pressed *Goodbye California*, it was 2002 or 2003. The modern world at the time was all about CDs. CD-Rs were present, but frowned upon and not taken seriously. I wanted something that looked one hundred

percent pro and, at the time, the lowest amount of discs you could replicate at any plant was five hundred. So there you have it. Plus, I really thought it was something I could get behind at the time—not something I swept under the rug, which is what happened in reality.

Patrick: Do you feel fortunate to be where you are at this point, being able to look back and learn from that early material?

Steve: Completely, but that’s also paralleled with wishing I could go back and iron out the mistakes I made when I was younger. I’m only getting older, and with age comes the diminishing of physicality, along with the chance of ceasing to be relevant. Which—none of this really is—but even more so, is my fear.

With that in mind, as much I wish I could go back and do it all at twenty-three again, I’m beyond grateful for everything that’s happened. It’s beyond my wildest expectations, really. I started making music to appease myself, so I wouldn’t go insane. I never assumed or expected anyone would care. If you went back in time and told the twenty-three-year-old Steve what the thirty-two-year-old Steve would achieve, he’d probably cry, shit his pants, and tell you he could die happy.

steveadamykband.com

WAITING FOR A TAXI, NOT A BUS:

An Awesome Fest 7 Diary

By Kevin Dunn
Layout by Lauren Measure



RACHEL MURRAY FRAMINGHEDDU



PAUL SILVER

IHATE MIKE FALOON. But I love Anna, my life partner lady friend. She has been extremely supportive of everything I've done for over two decades—I mean full-throated supportive of whatever hare-brained, half-assed scheme I've cooked up. So when I raised the idea of my flying across country to attend the 7th annual Awesome Fest in San Diego—with her staying home to take care of our two daughters who would still be out-of-school while she was back teaching—she enthusiastically backed the idea and even suggested I ask our college for research funds to defray some of the costs. It turned out the school was okay with my flying to San Diego to spend three days at a DIY punk music festival. I've got a good job.

I've been involved in punk culture since the early/mid-1980s. I've played in bands, run a crappy label, put out zines, and generally adhered to the do-it-yourself ethos at the heart of independent punk culture. I decided I needed a scholarly project that kept me closer to home after the birth of my second daughter. I usually write about African politics and the past few trips there brought me to conflict zones, which just didn't seem like a good idea now that I had two daughters. I decided to start writing scholarly work about global punk.

I started formally interviewing bands, owners of indie record labels, anarcho-punk squatters, random folks at shows, scene organizers, and the like. I was already familiar with these scenes, so it was an easy transition. I started carrying a tape recorder to shows and sometimes a video

camera, which yielded a documentary film about a hometown punk band, Stevie Stiletto. The drag was that I lived and worked in a small town in western New York. There weren't a lot of bands coming through town (read: none), so it usually meant I had to travel if I wanted face-to-face interviews.

Going to Awesome Fest made a lot of sense. Sixty-five bands over three days in one place. Not only would I be able to conduct several interviews, I would also get to see lots of bands I loved but would probably never get to see perform live otherwise. With Anna's support (and my college's financial backing) I boarded my flight on Labor Day weekend 2013.

The hotel closest to the venues, the Lafayette, had become notorious for their harassment of Awesome Fest attendees. Despite attempts by the event's organizers to work out a deal with the management—including an offer to rent out the entire hotel for the weekend—the hotel refused, then raising the room rates for the weekend. Regardless, it was still packed with tattooed and bearded punks from around the country. I chose to stay elsewhere.

My friend Todd, *Razorcake* editor, recommended I stay in a hotel northeast of the venues. The Lafayette, he said, was a major bummer because of security, plus it would be hard to sleep with all the partying going on. He recommended a place where he and his wife would be, where the pool wouldn't be packed, and one could sleep in if necessary.

But it was several miles from the venue and I was relying on public transportation. It took two buses and forty-five minutes to arrive at the Soda Bar, the site of registration

gave me a ridiculous stack of napkins with my slices and I stashed them in one of my pockets, instinctively suspecting they'd come in handy later.

The other evening venue, aside from the Soda Bar, was the Void: a nice dive bar that had recently changed owners and name (previously Bar Eleven, where I spent some time with Davey on my last visit to San Diego—that trip being for an academic conference). The new owner painted over all the fliers on the interior walls with a thick coat of black paint. It must have been a recent decision, because the whole place still smelled like paint fumes.

I started seeing people wearing shirts for bands that I recognized and liked as I got closer to the venue. That rarely happens in my life. In fact, it has never happened in the twelve years that I have worked on my college campus.¹ If any student is wearing a

the bands that were playing. That just seemed like I was trying to suck up. I also didn't want to wear any of the more recognizable band T-shirts lest people think I was trying too hard to fit in. I decided on shirts for a small record label a friend runs out of Buffalo, a shirt for the band I made the documentary about, and Mitch Clem's "band" T-shirt. Mitch irregularly draws the comic strip *Nothing Nice to Say*, and the snarky, jaded punk character is always wearing a shirt that simply says "band." I figured if anyone got the reference they'd be cool.

I had my video camera with me because I was helping film the shows for *Razorcake*'s YouTube channel. I quickly found that having the camera was extremely useful. It was really difficult to drink beer and film effectively at the same time. So I decided to prioritize the filming, which was one of the wisest decisions I would make all weekend. It kept me on an even keel the whole time.

I started seeing people wearing shirts for BANDS THAT I RECOGNIZED AND LIKED as I got closer to the venue. That rarely happens in my life. In fact, it has never happened in the twelve years that I have worked on my college campus...¹ It felt like home, EXCEPT THAT ACTUALLY NEVER HAPPENS AT HOME.

and one of the two evening venues. As I walked in, I saw the figure of Davey Tiltwheel in the back. He bellowed "Kevin Dunn" and I was in what would be the first of many bear hugs that weekend. It was around three in the afternoon, Davey was already drinking and I didn't want him to feel awkward about that, so I grabbed a beer. It went down fast and I realized that I needed to pace myself or serious trouble lay ahead. I was trying to arrange an interview with The Dopamines, and I needed to be fairly sober for that.

For dinner I walked down to Luigi's and got a couple of slices of pizza. TripAdvisor recently conducted a survey that found San Diego to be the American city with the best pizza, ahead of NYC and Chicago. It was based on pizza places "per capita," which is weird and makes the whole thing suspect. I mean, the slices were good but not as good as my favorite joint back home. The server

music-themed T-shirt, nine times out of ten it is a spliff-smoking Bob Marley T-shirt tucked into a pair of Dockers. My students and I exist in different musical worlds.

But now I saw shirts for Toys That Kill, Grabass Charlestons, Hickey, and The Copyrights among others. Many of these folks were probably half my age, but I felt a strong connection to them. Spotting my wristband, they'd smile, greet me, and occasionally initiate a friendly conversation. It felt like home, except that actually never happens at home. I'm pretty sure most people in my hometown have no idea about any of the bands whose T-shirts I regularly wear. The people at Awesome Fest were speaking my language—even if it's a non-verbal language.

I know it sounds dorky, but I spent some serious time deciding which T-shirts to wear to the fest. I didn't want to wear a shirt for any of

I found that there is also something weirdly unnerving about filming a punk show. Initially, I was constantly watching the screen in order to make sure the footage was okay. I realized that, in doing so, the experience was being mediated through the tiny screen. I was oddly detached from the energy of the show even though I was right in the middle of it. Eventually I struck a good balance. I stopped worrying about panning or zooming in and out. Instead, I left the zoom wide open to catch the whole stage, held it high over my head, and would only glance up at it every few minutes to ensure that my aim wasn't too off-target.

Standing outside one of the venues, a young kid was complaining that his band just got back from tour in debt. An old veteran

¹ Actually, it happened once, and you can read about it at <http://www.razorcake.org/columns/poly-styrene-thank-you-marianne-elliott-said-1957-2011>.



RACHEL MURRAY FRAMINGHEDDU

musician laughed and said "Of course! But you're already planning your next tour aren't you?" The kid said, "Yeah, we're heading out in October for two weeks." Everyone laughed.

One of the reasons I think punk is important—why I both write about it and participate in it—is because I think independent cultural production is increasingly important in our daily lives. DIY punk flies under the radar. It isn't built on a profit-maximizing business model. I have repeatedly referred to owners of DIY punk record labels as intentionally bad capitalists. They usually aren't interested in making lots of money. Rather, they believe in the music, want to support their friends, and help build and strengthen the community. Bands tend to lose money when they go on tour, yet they do it over and over again. People booking shows usually don't do it to make money. Instead, they want to see certain bands come play in their town. Those bands are usually their friends or are about to be.

Awesome Fest represents all of these dynamics on a larger scale. For seven years, it has been a volunteer-run effort of immense love. This is contrary to how most of the music industry works: from bands to music clubs to record companies, the bottom line within the industry is always the bottom line. Not only does DIY punk defy that model, it actively challenges it, showing that there are alternatives; there is space for vital and independent creative production; there is a loving community that cares about art, passion,

and each other's interpretation of reality; and in the words of Seth Tobocman "You don't have to fuck people over to survive," even though society seems to tell us otherwise. This is a powerful lesson in today's world, and DIY punk provides a vital example.

Originally I thought I would try to catch at least a few songs of every band. For the first hour or two, I bounced between the Soda Bar and the Void, capturing footage of two or three songs by each band. That plan was shattered when I finally got a text from The Dopamines that they were in the Soda Bar ready to be interviewed.

There are lots of challenges to interviewing bands. You need to do your research so you don't come across like a complete tool (if you happen to have some obscure bit of dirt you can pull out, even better). There are certain questions you want to avoid, such as "how is the tour going?" and "where do you see yourselves in two years?" (two questions I actually asked over the weekend). You want to be engaged and interested, but not fawning.

And with some bands, you want to get your timing right regarding their alcohol consumption. If they are drinking, it is good to get them when they've had enough to drink that they are open and forthright, but before they get sloppy, unfocused, slurry, and possibly belligerent. I hit the sweet spot

perfectly that night with The Dopamines. They had been drinking for a while and were in a great mood, but were still articulate and focused. I began to ask my first question: "I heard a rumor that some Juggalos shot up one of your shows and stabbed some fans..." Before I even finished, lead singer and guitarist John was trying to set the record straight, while elaborating on the absurdities of the evening. About fifteen minutes later, I was able to ask a follow-up question.

A few hours later, I ran into them again and realized that the window for catching them at the right time had long closed. They were glass-eyed and unfocused, giving me high fives and hugs as they staggered and slurred. They seem to have passed their tipping point.

An hour later they walked onto the stage at the Soda Bar to play. They were still staggering and swaying. The audience erupted after they hit their first notes. Beer cans started flying towards the stage, and the band got sprayed by a steady stream of beer and water. They launched into the first of a lengthy volley of pop-punk gems, feeding off the energy of the crowd and bouncing around the stage. If they dropped a beat, missed a note, or forgot a lyric, I didn't catch it. And the audience didn't care, as they sang along to every "whoa-oh" and danced to every hook. The Dopamines were a focused beam of pop-punk power. They were professional drunk musicians in ways that The Replacements weren't. It was impressive to witness.

Earlier that night, I caught the Neighborhood Brats playing at the Void. The Neighborhood Brats are excellent musicians, but the focal point is really lead singer Jenny. A fireball of energy on stage, she was mesmerizing to behold. She prowled the stage, throwing high kicks—and side kicks and low kicks constantly. Her stage presence was riveting. As impressive as other singers might have been over the weekend, they seemed to have been struggling in a sea of oatmeal in comparison to Jenny's seemingly effortless gymnastics.

About three songs in, blood suddenly appeared on Jenny's face. A lot of blood.

The last show of that night was Toys That Kill, fronted by Todd Congelliere. Todd plays in multiple bands, including F.Y.P., Underground Railroad to Candyland, and Benny The Jet Rodriguez, all of which played over the weekend. He also runs Recess Records, which is one of my favorite DIY punk labels of all time (having released everything from The Arrivals to Pinhead Gunpowder). I've been listening to Todd and buying his music for years, but had never met him until San Diego. He is an unassuming guy, and performs wearing a bandana-headband that made me think of Bruce Springsteen for some odd reason.

had numerous conversations via email and Facebook over the years. And though we had only officially met a few hours earlier, we had run into each other throughout the day and had had numerous conversations. As he passed by, he expressed concern that I was waiting for a bus. Even after telling him that I was trying to flag down a taxi, he expressed his repeated concern that the buses didn't run that late in San Diego and if I was waiting for one I might never get home. Either he finally realized I was waiting for a taxi or got distracted by another thought, but he eventually stumbled on towards his own bed.

That was one impressive aspect of Awesome Fest: everyone looking out for each other, regardless of how drunk they were.

THE GATEWAY DISTRICT



PAUL SILVER

It looked like she had a serious nose bleed. I'm not sure how it happened. Perhaps she whacked herself in the nose during one of her numerous high kicks.

At first she was unaware of her injury, immersed in her performance and the battering-ram music that was accompanying it. But maybe she finally tasted the blood. As the song ended, she cried out good-naturedly: "Oh my god, I'm bleeding from my head!" When she realized it was a nosebleed she called out for tampons, Kleenex, napkins, anything.

It was then that I remembered the wad of napkins I had shoved into my pocket at Luigi's. I pushed my way up front and handed her the napkins. She took them gratefully, wiped away the blood, and then shouted out the count in for the next song: "1-2-3-4." Then she was off again, throwing high kicks with abandon.

It was clear that I was not the only Toys That Kill fan at Awesome Fest, as the Soda Bar was crushed with human flesh. And when the band broke into "Nervous Front" most of the sweaty faces had smiles plastered on them. I was exhausted from the jet-lag, but I hung in there until the blissful end.

After the show, I stepped down the block to flag a taxi back to my hotel. I figured I needed to separate myself from the throngs coming out of the Soda Bar or I'd never be seen by a passing cab driver. As I waited, my friend Chris stumbled by. Chris plays in the band Low Culture and also runs Dirt Cult records. As with Todd of Recess, I had never met Chris until that day, but I have communicated often with him. I trust his tastes and buy pretty much every Dirt Cult release on faith. Chris and I have also

The next morning, I got up and went for a quick swim at the hotel. There, I ran into Todd of *Razorcake* and his wife MC. Todd said he had some bad news. The day before he had been having such ear pain that he went to see a doctor. His ears were so infected, the doctor could not even get her otoscope (I Googled the name) into his ears. He was on antibiotics and feeling a little better. But I could not imagine a worse ailment to have at a music festival than an ear infection.

Todd had an interview scheduled with Low Culture that afternoon and kindly invited me to tag along. As we met up with the band, Chris turned to me and said "Hey Kevin, I haven't seen you since registration yesterday

morning." I thought he was joking, especially since we had talked numerous times. I soon realized he wasn't joking and told him about all of our encounters, including the bus vs. taxi conversation less than 12 hours ago.

He looked chagrined. "I should just keep my mouth shut."

On the way to interviewing Low Culture, Todd and I swapped gifts. I gave him a T-shirt of one of my bands and Todd gave me a new zine by a mutual friend about coming to last year's Awesome Fest. As I dropped the zine into my bag, I reflected on an important but often unreflected-upon aspect of my life: the

Saturday's afternoon shows were held in two small clubs, The Office and U31. U31 was a dance club that I suspect tends towards the hip-hop end of the spectrum. The Office was a little bit harder to pin down, as it had recently gone through a makeover, with walls adorned with poster-sized blow-ups of steamy pulp novels about office romances. Neither bar, it was clear, usually hosts punk rock shows.

DIY punk has often sought out spaces where it can flourish outside of the mainstream. Awesome Fest was a good example of that in action. It wasn't held in a huge auditorium or an established

A contemporary anarchist theorist named Hakim Bey has argued that the only way to resist modern capitalist culture is to create what he calls "temporary autonomous zones" (TAZs) in which spontaneous cultural production and expression can take place. His argument is that true acts of rebellion are so quickly co-opted by the powers-that-be, one has to work both against and within the system simultaneously, throwing up acts of resistance wherever one can, and then quickly moving along.

Much of DIY punk plays with this logic. There are many examples of TAZs in DIY punk: the illegal shows in warehouses, garages, basements and backyards that take place around the world. Every year, punks in

There's an old blues line that was appropriated by Shanghai River that applies: "YOU DON'T QUIT PLAYING BECAUSE YOU GET OLD, YOU GET OLD BECAUSE YOU QUIT PLAYING." There ain't no shame in surviving.

majority of music that I listen to is made by people I know personally or, if they are still alive, could get to know rather easily. That music is almost exclusively released on small independent record labels by people I know or could get to know if I tried. The same goes for the majority of what I read, which is usually in the form of self-published zines or books, or books from small, independent publishers.

The reason for this is that I am part of a global network of DIY cultural producers. While not outside of global capitalism—because it is impossible to be outside of it in this day and age—it tends to fly under the radar, outside of the corporate-controlled media structures. These products are distributed informally, often on a one-to-one basis (e.g., I buy my Recess Records directly from Todd Congelliere). These networks are vast, with a global reach that includes much of Europe, parts of Latin America, parts of Africa and the Middle East, and across Asia to Japan and Indonesia. (I personally and regularly interact with DIY punks in almost all of those places.) As I mentioned earlier, this network is a support network that seeks self-sufficiency and growth, not profit maximization and extraction. I ignore what the massive corporations are constantly trying to sell me. Instead, I read, listen to, and watch cultural products that have been hand-crafted, not mass-marketed. I am not alone. There are hundreds of thousands, if not millions like me. This is the global DIY punk culture. And it is alive and well.



PAUL SILVER

music club. Rather, the organizers had convinced the two afternoon venues to let them use those spaces for a few hours on Saturday and Sunday before their regular crowds moved in. They provide the two evening venues with a guaranteed crowd for shows the management didn't have to book themselves. All this was done outside—or underneath—the established structures of the music industry.

Scotland cross over to an island via an isthmus at low tide and then throw a punk festival once the tide rises and separates it from the mainland and the police. Awesome Fest isn't a TAZ, but it does exist in the netherworld between spontaneous TAZs and the established structures of corporate America. For three days, it finds spaces to set up shop, creates some intense culture production, and then it is gone (pretty much under the radar

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WORTHWHILE WAY

EL DIABLO

of the establishment). Dance clubs like The Office and U31 are appropriated by punks for a few hours each year. Acoustic shows are held in a nearby pizza joint. A few bands set up on the sidewalk for impromptu shows. There was no corporate sponsorship.

Throughout the weekend, the crowd of punks themselves were not an entirely homogenous bunch. Yes, there were plenty of black jeans and black T-shirts. There were plenty of button-down shirts as well. Lots of tattoos—some freshly inked, some faded by multiple decades. There were crusty punks with dreadlocks and stinky camos (and at least one dog on a rope leash, which is required whenever more than six crusties congregate in one place). For a musical genre often characterized as “white male and suburban” there were scores of women, Hispanics, African-Americans, and LGBTQ folks present; enough to turn that stereotype on its head multiple times. White males were probably in the majority, but only just. While it certainly isn’t without its racism, sexism, and homophobia, punk has also long been a space for freaks, rejects, and outcasts of all shapes, sizes, colors, and genders.

And ages. At every show, there was a multi-generational crowd. No one batted an eye when a grey-haired dude wandered around the dance floor. There were plenty of them about, including me.

In a consumerist society that is geared towards the younger 16-24 year old buying demographic (except when it is trying to sell older demographics products to make them feel or look younger) this is quite unusual. There aren’t a lot of “youth cultures” (which is a term I have heard applied to punk numerous times) that is as multi-generational as punk. And this has been a characteristic of almost every punk scene I have been associated with. There have always been older punks—

and sometimes much older punks—active in the scenes. It never felt particularly odd (except for the occasional lecherous dude creeping about) or noteworthy. There have always been older punks role-modeling how one stays engaged and productive gracefully. There’s an old blues line that was appropriated by Shanghai River that applies: “you don’t quit playing because you get old, you get old because you quit playing.”

Or, to put it another way, there ain’t no shame in surviving.

Saturday afternoon was also spent watching an interesting new breed of punk bands: the duo in love. This generally consists of a guy playing guitar with a female drummer. Sometimes both sing. They tend to be facing each other, rather than the crowd. Sometimes the duo is actually married.

This was the case with Shellshag and Spokenest, both of which played in The Office on Sunday afternoon. The night before witnessed International Dipshit, though technically they are just dating and not married.

In each case, the females are damn good drummers. In the case of Spokenest, Adrian’s drumming is mind blowing. And while you might not think that two people in love singing to each other is very punk rock, it is.

At its core, it’s about romance. But it’s also punk as hell.

My feet were killing me by Saturday evening. I had been walking around town and standing for hours in Converse high-tops. I always wear Converse Chucks, but the strain was getting to me and I made Todd drive me to a pharmacy to buy some cushion inserts for my shoes. Getting old sucks in some ways.

On Sunday, Todd and I interviewed the band Jabber, fronted by Danny, who sported shocking orange hair. She said that it had been red, but it turned orange after swimming in the Lafayette hotel pool the day before.

This was only my second time meeting Danny, though we have maintained a regular correspondence for several years. She used to sing for the band The Pillowfights!, which were a wonderful Ramones-esque pop punk band that excelled in writing short, catchy songs. I listened to them a fair amount and one day I recognized that my daughters (who were probably seven and four at the time) were singing their songs around the house. I thought this was crazy cool, so I sent Danny a Facebook message out of the blue.

A few weeks later, Danny sent my daughters a package with Pillowfights! T-shirts, stickers and handmade posters with their names on them and things like “You are awesome!” and “You are beautiful!” To say it made their day is an understatement of epic proportions. They send Danny stuff on a regular basis, and she continues to mail them awesome things back. In fact, the only thing they cared about with my trip to San Diego was that I was going to see Danny.

As a feminist punk rock dad trying to raise feminist punk rock daughters, Danny is an important and deeply appreciated role model. As are Jenny of Neighborhood Brats, Adrian of Spokenest, Maren and Carrie of the Gateway District, and numerous other female punk figures. They are not just role models for other females in the scene, but also for feminist punk rock dads like me.

That afternoon, Todd and I hung out behind The Office interviewing Jeff and John of the Houston band Muhammadali. We sat on the ground in the parking lot, having to get up at one point so somebody could park their car where we were sitting. It was a slow, easygoing conversation. They weren’t as manic or hilarious as The Dopamines had been two days before, but there was no shortage of funny stories.

We spent about an hour interviewing them and then probably another half an hour chatting after the tape recorder was off. This is something I’ve come to take for granted when interviewing DIY punk bands: with very few exceptions, these interviews have tended to be conversations; reflective dialogues about life, art, and the intersections of both. They are about getting to know each other better. About recognizing and exploring the humanity in the process of living and making music. They are rarely about selling a record or promoting a tour or convincing you why their band matters. In that way, they are fundamentally different for what passes as “interviews” in the entertainment industry.

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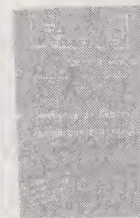
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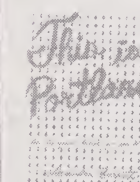
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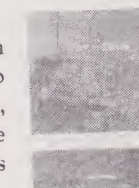
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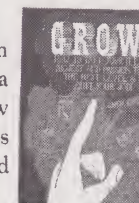
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I am really not interested in seeing reunion bands. I haven't bothered to go see the reunited Pixies, though I have had a couple of opportunities to do so. Seeing a reunited Replacements has absolutely no appeal to me, even though I adored them when they were together and still listen to their early releases on a regular basis. (I did, however, see a reunited Archers of Loaf and they were actually better now than any of the three times I saw them in the 1990s.)

That said, two of my favorite sets at Awesome Fest were played by reunited bands: Radon from Gainesville, FL and Athens, GA's Carrie Nations. Both put on great shows, but while Radon played to a packed venue, the Carrie Nations performed in front of no more than thirty people (thirty extremely psyched and happy people, it should be noted).

What was so great about the Carrie Nations show was that they obviously spent some time preparing for the set (which I am pretty sure was just a one-off for them) and were clearly super-stoked to be there. When they weren't blasting through songs with unbelievable energy, they were smiling and laughing. So much heart was on display, it was inspiring. Easily one of the best performances I saw all weekend.

Wreck Of The Zephyr was one of the other stellar performances on Sunday night. Wreck Of The Zephyr is a three-piece out of L.A. made up of Noah, Dave, and Eric. They ripped that shit up. Their drummer plays with a fury that is disarming, especially from a guy who seems so skinny and, well, demure. Noah slashes at his hollowbody guitar like a possessed preacher and, when he backs away from the microphone, will often go into spastic convulsions. Eric—while no slouch himself—comes across reserved in contrast. Watching them, comparisons to the Minutemen and Wire come to mind, but also Woody Guthrie. If Guthrie were alive and playing in a punk band today, he'd probably look, play, and sound a lot like Noah.

I had actually gotten to know these three over a year before when I helped book a show for them at a burrito joint in the mountains of N.C. They had gotten my name and number via a mutual friend, and they were looking to find a place to play in between Athens and Richmond. I was actually on vacation in N.C., so I hooked them up and let them crash out in a little cabin that I am building on my mother-in-law's farm. People who saw that show were still talking in awe about it for weeks afterwards. They're not a live band you forget quickly.

They had actually driven down a few hours before their set and had to load up and head back shortly afterwards. In that window of two to three hours, we got to hang out and catch up. They asked about my girls, the cabin, and farm life. It was only the second time we'd hung out, but we shared an intimacy that was palpable. As they left, we all hugged and expressed our love for each other.



EL DIABLO

When people write about punk, they often note that punk sought to tear down the barriers between the musicians and the audience. This is definitely true. But people usually frame this merely in terms of accessibility. There is, in fact, much more going on. The artists and the audience are intertwined in DIY punk. In fact, they became one and the same at Awesome Fest. When a band played, there were usually other bands in the audience. There is a collectivity and an equality at play. People get to know each other, get inspired by each other, and help each other. (Noah helped me mix my own band's debut a few months earlier.)

Within this dynamic there is something profound taking place, which may be one of the primary reasons I think DIY punk is so important: it helps transform passive consumers into active cultural producers.

The core practice of DIY punk is inspiring others to get involved, to do it themselves. Don't just sit there passively buying whatever products companies are selling you. Get up and actively make your own culture. Be your own producer. This form of self-empowerment can be transformational, if not revolutionary. I know, because I see it in action all the time.

Earlier that evening, Todd bowed out. His ear infection was flaring up and spreading to the other ear. We had just watched the Carrie Nations and he wanted to go out on a high note. It was clear he was in pain, and it was pretty impressive he had soldiered on for as long as he did.

I told him that I was going to stay until the end because I was determined to see Tiltwheel, the very last band of the lineup. As he left, he said "I just want to warn you: sometimes they can be brilliant, but other times... well, they can be a hot mess."

Later that night, after watching Tiltwheel and flagging down yet another taxi, exhausted and happy, I pulled out my phone and sent Todd a one-line email:

"Hot mess."

I was up early the next morning, packing my suitcase and heading to the airport for the long flight back to western New York. As I settled into the first leg of my three-legged flight, I opened up my bag to get my laptop. My plan was to type up some notes about my trip. I had a vague idea that I'd either post it on a blog, put it together as a stand-alone zine, or more likely try to use it in a book I am working on about the politics of global DIY punk.

As I was pulling out my laptop, I saw the zine Todd had given me earlier. Always one to procrastinate, I decided I would read the zine first. It was, after all about the previous year's Awesome Fest.

It was by my friend Mike Faloona and was entitled "Two Skunks for Valentine's Day."

It was brilliant. It was funny. It was insightful. My god, he was even able to quote from *Moby Dick* to describe the punks hanging out in front of the Soda Bar. This shit was genius.

Who the hell did I think I was, trying to write an essay about going to Awesome Fest when it had already been done—and done so fucking well—by Mike Faloona? Mike's work was humbling. I should just throw my laptop away.

But it was also inspiring. Isn't that what DIY punk is about? Inspiring others to be active cultural producers. So I opened up my laptop and started typing:

"I hate Mike Faloona..."



TOP FIVES

RAZORCAKE



Adam Mullett

1. Criminal Damage, *Call of Death*
2. Eddie Money, *Super Hits*
3. Cock Sparrer, *Shock Troops*
4. Major Lazer, *Essential Mix*
5. The Portland Timbers. RCTID.

Art Ettinger

- Submachine, *In Spite of Everything...* LP
- ANTISEEN, *Live Possum! CD*
- Rotten UK, *Bloody Hell 7"*
- Future Virgins, *Late Republic LP*
- GG Allin, *My Prison Walls* (book)

Bill Pinkel

- Future Virgins, *Late Republic*
- Neko Case, *The Worse Things Get, The Harder I Fight, The Harder I Fight. The More I Love You*
- Glocca Mora, *Just Married*
- White Night, *Prophets of Templum CDXX*
- Bad Sports, *Bras*

Caitlin Hoffman

- Top Five Bands My Boyfriend Introduced Me To (That I Wish I'd Discovered Myself)*
1. The Hold Steady
 2. Beauty School Dropout
 3. The Descendents
 4. Hot Water Music
 5. Biffy Clyro

Camille Reynolds

- Top 5 Things Keeping Me Warm This Fall/Winter*
1. Vinyasa Yoga
 2. Brain Attack, Self-titled 7" EP
 3. Pumpkin bread, pumpkin pie, pumpkin candles... you get the picture.
 4. Crooked Bangs live at Third Space in Davis, CA (flask of vodka in hand)
 5. La Luz and an equally warm and fuzzy blanket to match.

Candice Tobin

1. Wire, *Pink Flag*
2. Mind Spiders, *Inhumanistic*
3. Blasphemous day-drinking at Bar 107 on Yom Kippur!

4. The Dirtbombs, *Ultraglide in Black*
5. Classics Of Love, Self-titled

Cassie Snieder

- Top Five Worst Songs to Make Out to*
1. George Michael, "Father Figure"
 2. TSOL, "Code Blue"
 3. Clash, "Finger Poppin'"
 4. Misfits, "Last Caress"
 5. Gary Puckett & the Union Gap, "Lady Willpower"

Chad Williams

1. Doomriders, *Grand Blood LP*
2. Proxy, *Police Car 7"*
3. Weird Womb, *Ruined by the 90's 7"*
4. ToyGuitar, Self-titled 7"
5. Bad Antics, *Where Did I Go Wrong? LP*

Chris Terry

1. Krayola, Demo CD-R
2. Purple 7, Demo and live
3. Early '90s dancehall reggae (Shabba!)
4. Scissor Sisters, *Night Work LP*
5. By the time you read this, I'll be living in L.A.

Chris Mason

1. IO//SÉ, Self-titled LP
2. Blank Pages, Self-titled LP
3. Bad Sports, *Bras LP*
4. Rough Kids, *The State I'm In LP*
5. Benny The Jet Rodriguez, *Home.Run. LP*

Christina Zamora

- Top 5 Bands at Awesome Fiesta Seite!*
1. Shellshag (I cried. Haha!)
 2. Terry Malts
 3. Carrie Nations
 4. Radon
 5. Siren Songs

Craig Horky

1. Superchunk, *I Hate Music*
2. Tin Armor, Self-titled
3. Obits, *Beds and Bugs*
4. The Night Marchers, *Allez Allez*
5. The First (Hopefully Annual) 18x24 Detroit Poster Pop Up Tent

Craven Rock

- Top 5 Band Names That Haven't Been Taken*
- Angular (post-punk/art punk band)
 - OK & The Not My Things (some band I'll have to review)

- Scion Tragedy (cynical crust punk band)
- Up Here (Riot grrrl band)
- Left Over Crack

Daryl Gussin

- Angel Du\$t, *Xtra Raw 7"* + music video for "Rage"
- Steppe People, live at Permanent Records
- Boilerman, *Loss Leaders LP*
- Frankie Teardrop's, new DIY venue in San Luis Obispo, CA
- Awesome Fest 7! Low Culture, Carrie Nations, Summer Vacation, WOTZ, Neighborhood Brats, etc.

Designated Dale

1. *Untamed* by Jack Grisham (book)
2. *Dreadnaught: King of Afropunk* by D.H. Peligro (book)
3. Juan Cirerol, the golden era punk spirit of Jerry Lee Lewis is strong in young Juan. A must-see.
4. Neighborhood Brats, *No Sun No Tan*
5. Motörhead, *Aftershock*

Evan Wolff

1. Future Virgins, *Late Republic*
2. Mind Spiders, *Inhumanistic*
3. Tin Armor, Self-titled
4. New Nervosas songs
5. Splashin' Safari, live at The Punk Porch

Gabe Rock

- Top 5 Mixtape #3*
- The Deadly Snakes, "Gore Veil"
 - The Records, "Starry Eyes"
 - Death, "Keep on Knocking"
 - Little Bob Story, "Like Rock'n Roll"
 - Digable Planets, "9th Wonder (Blackitloism)"

George Rager

- Top 5 reasons Germany is Awesome for Punk Rock...*
1. Cheap beer, cheap pizza, abundant vegan food.
 2. A culture of youth centers, house projects and squats that promote underground culture in an anti-racist, anti-homophobic environment.
 3. Punctual public transportation.
 4. Classic German punk bands like Schleimkeim that literally built their own recording gear (!!!) during the Soviet era.
 5. German punks largely enjoy conversing with foreign punks.

Joe Dana

- Top 5 Not Punk Songs I've played at Razorcake's 1 <3 Drinking Beer and Listening to Records Events at Bar 107*
5. "Don't You Ever Stop Loving Me Baby" by Millie Jackson

4. "Zorba's Dance" by Zorba the Greek Soundtrack
3. "Goldfinger Theme" by Shirley Bassey
2. "Anything" by Black Velvet Flag
1. "Rhinstone Cowboy" by Glen Campbell

Jennifer Federico

- Top 5 Nautically / Aquatically-titled Songs:*
- "Hey Sailor" by Murder City Devils
 - "Abandon Ship" by Gallows
 - "Hey Sailor" by Detroit Cobras
 - "Sink Florida Sink" by Against Me!
 - "In the Aeroplane over the Sea" by Neutral Milk Hotel

Jim Joyce

1. Reading Dee Dee Ramone's memoir *Poison Heart*, way better than his novel *Chelsea Horror Hotel*, and just as spooky.
2. Radioactivity's new song "World of Pleasure"
3. Riding a bike really fast south down Wolcott between Grand and Roosevelt (or any quiet street) and listening to White Lung's "Hunting Holiday" over and over.
4. Learning from artful punks that you can screenprint onto contact paper and make cheap stickers for your band, or the revolution.
5. Knowing that in a week, candy corn will be cheaper, pound for pound, than any other food.

Jimmy Alvarado

- Eric B. And Rakim, *Paid in Full LP*
- Freestyle Fellowship, *Inner City Griots LP*
- A Tribe Called Quest, *The Low End Theory LP*
- Nas, *Illmatic LP*
- Black Star, *Mos Def & Talib Kweli Are... LP*

John Mule

1. Night Birds, *Born to Die in Suburbia*
2. Night Birds, *Maimed for the Masses*
3. Harley Poe, *Pagan Holiday*
4. Evil Conduct, *Working Class Anthems*
5. Neighborhood Brats, *No Sun No Tan*

Jordan Anne Jacobi

- What I Loved at Awesome Fest 7*
1. International Dipshit at The Office, for the fame
 2. Summer Vacation at The Void, for the sweat
 3. URTC at The Office, for the classics
 4. Creeps at U31, for the babes
 5. Shellshag at The Office, for the romance

That. Was. Punk.

Juan Espinosa

- Varix, *I Can't Get Out!* 7"
- Spine / The Repos, *Split* 7"
- Raspberry Bulbs, *Deformed Worship* LP
- Ruleta Rusa, *Aqui No Es* LP
- Low Tax, Demo cassette

Kevin Dunn

- Carrie Nations, *Be Still* LP
- Low Culture, "Evil" b/w "Slave to You" 7"
- Sundowners, *The Larger Half of Wisdom* LP
- Terry Malts, *Nobody Realizes This Is Nowhere* LP
- Mike Faloan, *Two Skunks for Valentine's Day* zine

Kurt Morris

1. Propagandhi, *Failed States*
2. Strand Of Oaks, *Dark Shores*
3. The Hex Dispensers, *Winchester Mystery House*
4. The Rutabaga, *Brother the Lights Don't Work*
5. Pelican, everything

Liz Prince

- The Young Leaves, *Alive and Well*
- Chumped, Self-titled
- Shambles, *Move Away*
- Seltzer (yes, the kind you drink)
- The *As You Were* comic anthology

Marty Ploy

- Top 5s of Awesome Fest 7*
- Riki Sushi (Best sushi I've ever had.)
 - Gabe and Tiffany are the best AF roommates ever!
 - Getting to hangout with Shellshag for more than a few hours. (If you look up "cool" in a dictionary, there is a picture of Shell and Jen.)
 - Getting so many hugs and kisses from so many of my favorite people on this planet.
 - CARRIE NATIONS!

Matt Average

- Anti-Cimex, *Anarkist Attack, Raped Ass, and Victims of a Bomb Raid* EPs
- Ex-Cult, *Mister Fantasy* 7" single
- Blue Cross, *Conspiracy* LP
- Light Bearer, *Silver Tongue* 2 x LP
- Criaturas, *Espiritu de Libertad* 12" EP

Matthew Werts

- Mick Farren, *Vampires Stole My Lunch Money*
- Hoax, Self-titled
- The Amps, *Pacer*
- Bill Callahan, *Dream River*
- Priests, *Tape Two*

Mark Twistworthy

- Unwound, *Kid Is Gone* 3xLP
- Jesu, *Everyday I Get Closer to the Light from Which I Came* LP
- Bad Sports, *Bras* LP
- Future Virgins, *Late Republic* LP
- King Khan & The Shrines, *Idle No More* LP

Mike Dumps

- Future Virgins, *Late Republic* LP
- Suspicious Beasts, *Never Bloom* LP

- Nude Beach, *What Can Ya Do?* 7"
- Screaming Females / Tenement, *Split* 7"
- Toys That Kill / Future Virgins, *Split* 7"

Mike Faloan

1. Gorsky Press podcasts
2. Hussalonia, *Home Taping Is Killing Me* cassette
3. Spokenest, *We Move* 12"
4. Superchunk, *I Hate Music* LP
5. Young Fresh Fellows, "Loud, Loud, Loud, Loud Guitars" (Songs for Slim, August 2013)

Mike Frame

1. Pat Todd & Rankoutsiders, *14th & Nowhere* CD
2. Robbie Fuls, *Gone Away Backward* CD
3. Michael Monroe, *Horns & Halos* CD
4. Joan Jett & Blackhearts, *Unvarnished* CD
5. Bluefields, *Ramshackle* CD

Mitch Clem

- Wringer, *Bullfighter*
- Nona, *Through the Head*
- Meat Wave, Self-titled
- World's Scariest Police Chases, *NOFX ...And Out Come the Wolves* Dookie
- The Love Triangle, *Clever Clever*

Naked Rob

- Terrible Tuesday Radio Show | SFC**
- Multicult, *Jaws/Luxury* 7" (Baltimore noise rock)
 - Old Lines, *If You See Something, Say Something* 7" (Baltimore crust punk)
 - The Future Primitives, *Into the Primitive* LP (Cape Town garage rock)
 - Like Like The The The Death, *Cave Jenny* LP (Milwaukee noise rock pop punk)
 - Wau Y los Arrrghs!!!, *Todo Roto* LP (España garage punk)

Nardwuar the Human Serviette

1. *Ripple Rock* Fanzine—Amazing new zine from Finland!
2. *Eves Of Ass* #6—Filled with a bunch of great true life Craven Rock stories!
3. *NoMeansNo: Going Nowhere* book by Mark Black—Story of the GOAT band from Victoria, BC
4. Youth Bitch, "I'm in Love with Girls" 7"—Portland's Phinest Punx!
5. *Bone of the Ham*—Cool zine dedicated to all thing greats around Bellingham, Washington!

Rene Navarro

1. *Fifth-Business* by Robertson Davies (book)
2. Getting another tattoo from Marcos Siref.
3. Ali Valle being the best bike mechanic ever.
4. My dog Kimura who strangely sometimes makes everything seem okay. He really likes me.
5. Ennui Trust live at the Bike Oven, which was a bit ago, but I'm still not over it. That. Was. Punk.

Replay Dave

- Future Virgins, *Late Republic* LP
- Crusades, *Perhaps You Deliver...* LP
- Melvins, *Live at Third Man* LP
- Mind Spiders, *Inhumanistic*
- Jimmy Cliff, *The KCRW Session*

Rev. Norb

- Dirtbombs, *Ooey Goey Chewy Ka-Blooeey!* LP
- Soda Fraise, *Ca Baigne Dans L'Huile* 45
- La Flingue, *Kleb-Stoff Zero Deux* 12"
- Poppets, *Steal It Like a Thief* LP
- Toyotas, *Toyotas for Sale* 10"

Rich Cocksedge

- Stuff That Rocked My September*
- Timeshares live at The Cavern, Exeter (Awesome!)
 - Stoic Violence, Self-titled
 - Crazy Arm, *The Southern Wild*
 - Red Dons, *Notes on the Underground* 7"
 - Ruleta Rusa, *No Aqui Es*

Russell Van Cleave

- Top 5 Reggae Songs That Make Putting Babies to Sleep an Enjoyable Experience*
1. Junior Murvin, "Police and Thieves"
 2. Gregory Isaacs, "Extra Classic"
 3. The Clash, "Revolution Rock"
 4. Junior Dread, "Sufferer's Heights"
 5. The Pioneers, "Time Hard"

Ryan Nichols

- Mark Lanegan, *Imitations*
- Devo, *Hardcore Devo Vol. 1*
- Reed Avocados
- Au Pairs, *Playing with a Different Sex*
- Mulatu Astatke

Sal Lucci

- Top 5 Gonerfest 10 Moments*
1. Guitar Wolf, outside!
 2. Cosmic Psychos, *Blokes You Can Trust* documentary
 3. Head. 'Nuff said!
 4. Gino And The Goons, live
 5. No hangovers!

Sean Arenas

- TONGUE, *Body + Mind* 7"
- Radiator Hospital, *Something Wild* LP
- Leer, *Spring Break No Parents* LP
- Shinobu / Four Tomorrow, *Split* 7"
- Badlands, *So Little* Cassette

Sean Carswell

- Five Novels by Women Authors That Razorcake Readers Would Probably Enjoy*
- *Lilac Mines* by Cheryl Klein
 - *The Accidental* by Ali Smith
 - *Queenpin* by Megan Abbott
 - *Claire DeWitt and the City of the Dead* by Sara Gran
 - *Hotel Iris* by Yoko Ogawa

Sean Koeppenick

- DVDs I Have Recently Enjoyed*
1. *Escaped Maniacs* (Iggy & The Stooges)
 2. *My Life as a Jerk* (Circle Jerks)
 3. *Men of Action* (D.O.A.)
 4. *Heavy Metal* (the movie)
 5. *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (on Blu-Ray)

Steve Adamyk

1. Ugly Pop Records
2. Stiv Bators' Dead Boys, live 7"
3. Stiv Bators / David Quinton, *Split* 7"
4. Blitz, *All Out Attack* 7"
5. Partisans, *Police Story* 7"

Steve Hart

- William Winant, *Five American Percussion Pieces*
- *Fan Interference, A Collection of Baseball Rants and Reflections* (book)
- Jesu, *Everyday I Get Closer to the Light from Which I Came*
- Big Boys, *Fun, Fun, Fun...*
- Ruin (reunion show in Philly)

Tim Brooks

- Marked Men at Dirtnap 14th anniversary
- Bad Sam, *Working Class Holocaust* LP
- Radioactivity LP
- Violent Arrest / Endless Grinning Skulls, *Split* EP
- Novice, *Your Crime*

Toby Toher

- Top 5 Movies I Have Recently Enjoyed*
1. *Kings of Summer*
 2. *Moone Boy*, Season 1
 3. *Chasing Ice*
 4. *The House I Live In*
 5. *Derek*, Season 1

Todd Taylor

- Generacion Suicida, *Con La Muerte a Tu Lado*, LP
- Youth Avoiders, Self-titled LP
- Neighborhood Brats, *No Sun, No Tan*, LP
- Re-issue three-way tie, for completely different reasons: Broken Bottles, *Hospital* LP; Riverboat Gamblers, Self-titled LP; Flag Of Democracy, 23 LP
- Awesome Fest 7, ear infections be damned.

Tommy Vandervort

1. Dillinger 4 / Hard Skin / Canadian Rifle / Brickfight at the Subterranean.
2. Richard Pryor *Omit the Logic* documentary.
3. Pegboy at Liars Club. Jake Burns sang "Suspect Device" with the boys.
4. Defect Defect LP
5. Dwight D. Eisenhower farewell speech, 1961, tie with Erik Funk, dude fuckin' rules.

Ty Stranglehold

1. Mind Spiders, *Inhumanistic*
2. Bad Sports, *Bras*
3. Poison Idea, *Kings of Punk* reissue
4. Superchunk, *I Hate Music*
5. Riverboat Gamblers, Self-titled reissue

Yvonne Drazan

- Top 5 Burgers (and yes, I'm from Cali and In-N-Out is not on this list)*
1. Shake Shack (New York City)
 2. The Oinkster (Eagle Rock, CA)
 3. The Apple Pan (West L.A., CA)
 4. Damon's (Glendale, CA)
 5. Tin Horn Flats (Burbank, CA)



A.K.A.: *Golden Chains*: CD

Heavy nod to '80s punk with a vocalist who sounds, to put it bluntly, like she's barfing nails and summoning a ghoul at the same time. Harsh, ugly, and wire-tight, with the occasional little Ginn-like freakout, such as the laddering guitar work in the title track. Eight songs with the brittle and consistent yowl of hardcore and just mean as shit, with lyrics that focus on labor, inequality, and the often soul-killing nature of work and profit. Go into *Golden Chains* expecting pop punk and you're going to get your face sanded off. —Keith Rosson (A.K.A.)

ABJECT OBJECT: *Romance*: LP

French melodic punk. It's artful, clean, highly constructed, tuneful, and intentionally pushing the listener to meet them half way. (The lyrics are printed on the inside of the record pocket, but they're near the open edge, so it's possible to read them. It's not just horribly convenient. I appreciate and support such practices. Convenience is an addiction.) *Romance* engenders an intricate, precise geometric flatness and, for Abject Object, it's a definite positive and makes me think of the sonic space between Bitpart and Xaxaxa. The hooks come out after multiple listens and when they do, the record locks solidly into place and makes sense as a pattern, as distinct song pieces, and as a cohesive whole. Enjoyable. —Todd Taylor (abject.object@gmail.com, abjectobject.bandcamp.com / Echo Canyon / Protagonist / Corn Dog / Flower Of Carnage)

ABOLITIONIST:

The Growing Disconnect: LP

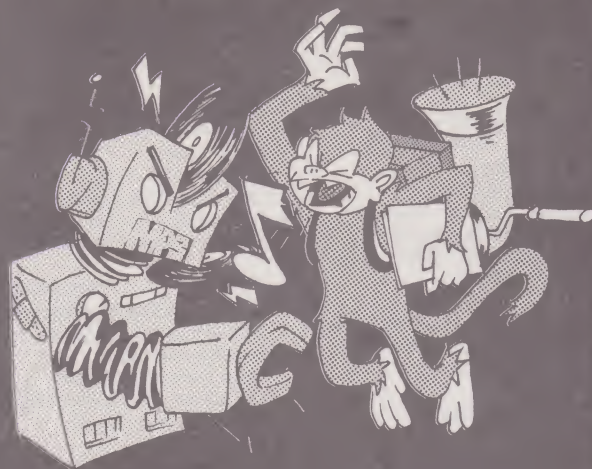
Dark, political punk from Oregon that recalls elements of early Anti-Flag, early Good Riddance, Avail, and Model American (remember them?), with a stylistic mix of '90s California and '80s Midwest punk. While the song structures and chord progressions are a little predictable at times, the music is a solid and effective backdrop for the lyrical narratives that the nine songs contain. Neither preachy nor simplistic, the songs are personal accounts of struggles, both internal and external, with the current state of national and international affairs. In other words, you can tell that they mean it. A solid record and a band that I'd like to see take that next step up. —Chad Williams (1859, 1859records.bandcamp.com / Tour Van, tourvanrecords.bandcamp.com / Different Kitchen, differentkitchenrecords.bandcamp.com / Lost Cat, lostcatrecords.org / Sex Sheet, sexsheetrecords.com / Hahah Cool, hahahacool.com)

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RECORD REVIEWS



"Oddball nasal vocals howling out personal grass-isn't-always-greener lyrics over jangling guitar and crashing drums."

—Matt Seward
HARD FEELINGS: *Swell... LP*

ANGERS CURSE: *Self-titled*: CD/LP

Angers Curse is what happens when there's a Swedish version of Earth Crisis that wants to be on a label like Bridge Nine, but they tell the band that they're going to have to write shorter, faster songs to fit in (twelve songs, twenty minutes), and then the label doesn't sign them anyway. —Kurt Morris (Monument / Gaphals / World Vs. Cometh / Defiant Hearts, angerscurse.bandcamp.com)

ANTI-CIMEX: *Anarkist Attack: 7" EP / Raped Ass: 7" EP / Victims of a Bomb Raid: 7" EP*

A reissue of the first three EPs by this venerable Swedish hardcore institution, courtesy of a Brazilian label. Their first salvo, 1981's *Anarkist Attack*, is an amateurish, yet spirited mix of the obligatory Discharge influence and sloppy, thuddy hardcore. It probably wouldn't be considered crucial to the casual listener, but is arguably ground zero for both the band and the whole fjdcore sound. Their follow-up, 1982's *Raped Ass*, is an altogether different beast. Tempos, vocals, and the Discharge-derived musical attack are ratcheted up several notches, with screaming vocals and pummeled instruments giving clearer insight into why the band became so influential. They followed up the next year with the *Victims of a Bomb Raid* EP,

which keeps the speed and Discharge influence at the fore and, while they back up a bit on the sonic flailing, they manage to do so without sacrificing any of the heft. All are faithfully reproduced and include inserts with cover variants from other reissues, as well as "liner notes" by one of the band members. It's highly recommend these be sought out, and fast 'cause I'm guessing there's only a handful of 'em floating around out there. —Jimmy Alvarado (Nada Nada, nadanadadiscos.com)

ANTILLECTUAL:

Perspectives & Objectives: CD/LP

Dutch punk band Antillectual is back with a fourth album, albeit the first one I've heard so far (a situation that since writing this review has been remedied). I got hold of a copy of *Perspectives & Objectives* after recently seeing the band live and although the music is pretty good, it was more the message that hooked me in. In terms of the musical content, there is obviously a strong skate punk influence but that's far from the be all and end all for Antillectual. Some of the tracks have a more pop/rock orientated sound, which offers up a slightly more relaxed feel to the record, allowing the messages to come through in a calm way. The lyrics deal with issues such as bullying, the lack of women at punk shows, and

also the need to not settle for a life that doesn't feature new experiences displaying a socially aware outlook. There are definitely some similarities to Bad Religion and Crazy Arm, both musically and lyrically, to be heard at times and neither of those are bad things in my book. —Rich Cocksedge (Lockjaw, rob@lockjawrecords.co.uk, lockjawrecords.co.uk)

ATOMIC BUDDHA, THE: *Blottered*: CD

After listening to this CD four and half times, I think I'm ready to say it's incredible. On *Blottered*, The Atomic Buddha go from fuzzy, spacey power pop to rock'n'roll maximum riffage, and never over-reach. They're The Buzzcocks and then Bob Mould is playing and then they're the Stooges for a few minutes, the vocals falling somewhere between Pete Shelley and Glenn Mercer. They sound like dorks who absorbed all the right records and cover the exact bases you want covered. Every song sounds like a demo version of a classic to-be. Some of the lyrics are a little rough, or kind of pedestrian/cheesy, like they're trying to make too much sense. But they seem like a band that can do anything, and they'll be even better when they figure out what not to do, or what doesn't need to be done. —Matt Werts (75orless, 75orlessrecords.com)

AU PAIRS:

Playing with a Different Sex: LP

It's funny reviewing a record that came out before I was born. But with that being said, this record still holds up and could probably be passed off as something new. Everyone playing the post-punk thing today seems to be compared to either Joy Division or Gang Of Four. Those bands were great, but those kinds of lazy comparisons leave out true gems like this one. *Playing with a Different Sex* has a very bass-heavy, dance, and punk feel. The bass on this record makes me think that Jane Munro (bassist/singer) is the fidgety type who can't sit still and dances for an entire set. Just listen to, "It's Obvious" and you'll see what I mean. They do minimal in a clever sort of way that proves that less is more. There is a broad mix of themes in their songs that deal with gender, hostages, love, and promiscuity. The mix of subject matter, as well as male and female vocals, makes for a great record. The packaging is great too. It comes on 180 gram pink vinyl. The insert has lyrics on one side and a fertility chart on the other side. Drastic Plastic out of Omaha, NE has been reissuing a lot of classic records from this era. Check out more of their releases if you like eighties, new wave, and post-punk. —Ryan Nichols (Drastic Plastic)

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BACKBURNERS, THE: Self-titled: CDEP

These five gritty songs—dirt-filled rock'n'roll with a punkish edge—are short and to the point. This could almost fit into the lineup of the Supersuckers and Nashville Pussy live show. With tight playing and a “screw you attitude,” this is the kind of music that begs to be played at a high volume. Great stuff from these guys and I’m looking forward to hearing more in the future from them. —Rick Ecker (MegaPlatinum, megaplatinum.net)

BACKSLIDER: Consequences: 10”

Sick Eyehategod-style opening into crushing powerviolence with start, stops, sputters, and spurts. There is a lot going on in the rhythm of these songs and while the band can be described as “pummeling,” they pull it off with finesse. The riffs are good and pull influence from punk as well as sludge and death metal. The result is a layered and engaging listen. Everything is played well, but what I like most about this record is how each song is tied together and the whole record feels like one cohesive composition. Basic recommendations for fans of Weekend Nachos, Iron Lung, and Triac. A welcome addition to the modern powerviolence catalog. —Ian Wise (Six Weeks, sixweeksrecords@comcast.net)

BAD SKIN: Self-titled: EP

Mid-tempo hardcore punk that reminds me of early ‘80s Boston bands like Negative FX. There’s the bellowing vocals, raw and jagged guitar sound, and

no frills, but effective, percussion. Primal and direct in its delivery. Four short blasts, with “Flamejob” being a standout. I like how the guitar goes from distortion to a semi-clean distortion-free kind of feel, similar to what bands like Social Distortion (when they were good) used to do. There’s also no denying the cranking introduction of “Commute.” The guitar comes on with a distorted and creaky sound, charging you up, then the vocals come in barking some angst shit. Pretty good stuff. —M.Avrq (Bad Vibrations, badvibrationsrecords@gmail.com)

BAD SPORTS: Bra: CD/LP

A power pop explosion that brings to mind a wide range of bands including The Saints, The Buzzcocks, Big Eyes, and The Posies, to name a few, that came to mind when listening to this. It’s not a bad album and there are a handful of decent songs to be found on *Bra*, although not enough to keep me fully engaged from start to finish—although if it’s on while I’m working then I’m oddly happy to listen to this a few times over. —Rich Cocksedge (Dirtnap)

BADLANDS: So Little: Cassette

Listen: Imagine yourself lying on a plateau somewhere in the Arizona high desert. You’re alone. The sun is setting in such way that the sky is hued in purples and oranges, like a Moroccan tapestry. If you need a soundtrack to this picture-perfect moment, let it be *Badlands’ So Little*. *Badlands* is Adrian Tenney of Spokenest and God Equals Genocide playing an assortment of

instruments such as ukulele, Balinese gongs, and piano. Yet, the greatest instrument is Tenney’s voice which she layers with melodic harmonies and otherworldly coos, a languorous quality reminiscent of Mirah and Your Heart Breaks. Tenney’s vocals drip out of the speakers making each song hauntingly dreamlike—ephemeral and succinct—with upbeat pace changes that plunge into subtle variations. Thankfully, *Badlands* never deviates towards exhausting musical interludes plagued by muddy reverb or indulgent experimentation. Instead, Tenney gracefully sings and strums her nylon guitar allowing the sounds to peacefully exhale. —Sean Arenas (Ghostbot, info@ghostbotrecords.com / Bite The Cactus)

BANGERS: Blind Hindsight: 7”

Bangers is certainly one of the best U.K. melodic punk bands around at the moment. This trio knows how to knock out punchy, catchy songs featuring lyrics that have a great amount of depth and interest to them. This release has two songs that are imbued with the classic Bangers sound and “The Nick of Time” just pips the title track as the better of the two. However, the surprise is to be found with the third track, “Log Jam,” which opens with an almost Celtic style lament and closes with a repetitive riff and beat combination that I could listen to for hours in its own right. This single is a definite step forward for the band. —Rich Cocksedge (Specialist Subject, andrew@specialistsubjectrecords.co.uk, specialistsubjectrecords.co.uk)

BIRTHDAY PARTY, THE:**The Bad Seed/Mutiny!: 2 x 12” EP + 7”**

How much of a travesty is it to admit ignorance of Nick Cave and his oeuvre in 2013? The little exposure I have to any of his stuff came when I tracked down some of the Birthday Party’s material after Mike Watt told me he dug bass player Tracy Pew’s playing. The songs on this gorgeously packaged double album—re-releases of the band’s last two EPs, as well as two previously unheard vault tracks—are driven by the aforementioned Mr. Pew’s cowboy bass playing over primitive beats, with shrill curtains of guitar descending to punctuate and inflect Nick Cave’s alternately screaming and intoning vox. I can see why people might file the band under gothic, but it’s a bit too unhinged for me to comfortably stash it there (which is a compliment). With all this said, if you’re an acolyte, this is not the place to start in terms of sheer economics: two twelve-inches and a seven inch, hand-numbered and limited to 1,500 copies, run somewhere in the neighborhood of thirty bucks. If you’re a collector nerd, though, by all means. —Michael T. Fournier (Drastic Plastic)

BITCH SCHOOL: Get Nasty on You: 7” EP

They might’ve copped their name from a Spinal Tap album, but they sure don’t sound like they’re joking. Four tracks of swaggering hard rock with enough sophistication to please the more discerning dirthead and enough

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savvy to infuse a little punk "fuck you" into their DNA to give things a bit of an edge. —Jimmy Alvarado (National Dust)

BLACK GOD: *Three: 7"*

This release is the third in a series of 7" singles that Kentucky "supergroup" Black God has released on No Idea. Conveniently titled *Three*, it allows a band made up from members of the likes of Coliseum, Black Cross, and Young Widows to knock out six tracks of mid-tempo punk rock based around some big riffs, pounding drums, and a dollop of intensity. Whilst not as immediate or as consistent as the second release in the series, this opens strongly with "Ghost in You," although beyond that and "Rank and File" nothing else really gets me overly excited here. It's not bad, but it's some way from being as good as its immediate predecessor (I haven't heard *One* so can't compare *Three* to it). —Rich Cocksedge (No Idea)

BOBBY JOE EBOLA AND THE CHILDREN MACNUGGETS / KREAMY 'LECTRIC SANTA: Split: 7"

Nice to finally hear these two bands, both of which I'd read about in fanzines (the latter in *The Artist Formerly Known as Iggy's Scam*, and the former in Matt Thompson's *Fluke*). I think the juxtaposition works well, as both of these bands are very much on their own trips. Kreamy 'Lectric Santa's side of the split features an electronic cover of what is apparently a Trash Monkeys song, as well as the real deal: wacko

art splatter with dual fe/male vox and disorienting time and tempo changes. Think Tragic Mulatto and you're on the right track. Bobby Joe Ebola And The Children MacNuggets rely on tongues planted firmly in cheeks, not entirely unlike Black Randy, as they attempt to bring their pointed political commentary to the norms with straight faces and straighter singing and instrumentation on their original "The Poor." A cover of a Tom Lehrer song rounds things off. This split is awesome, in that it makes me wanna seek out additional stuff from both bands. Bravo! —Michael T. Fournier (Mayfield's All Killer No Filler)

BOILERMAN: *Loss Leaders: LP*

Boilerman has a uniqueness in a sound that seems very oversaturated. Playing the style of melody-driven, rough punk which can be pinpointed by bands like Witches With Dicks and the less produced Banner Pilot stuff, Boilerman's hardcore background is definitely an asset. There's just more power in the sound. I mean, the bass player is wearing a His Hero Is Gone shirt, and the other two guys were in Cold Shoulder; you know you're gonna get something good, and this record does not disappoint. Multi-vocalist, trio devastation. Have the drummer do the fills while the guitar plays a lead, and the bass just never stops! There's an intensity that rages through the whole record. Can the intensity be traced back to straight edge? Who knows? But I do know that these guys are drawing from

something that a lot of people playing this style of music don't have, and it's making for some awesome music. Free Gym Guys! —Daryl (Self-released)

BROKEN BOTTLES: *Hospital: LP + CD*

Fuck, man. How can I be this happy and this sad at the same time? Happy first: holy shit, what a fantastic, labor-of-love reissue. Crisp, beautiful half and half translucent blue/clear vinyl. Paint splattered dust cover. Thick-ass chip cardboard silk-screened gatefold sleeve. Full-length zine of flyers, interviews (two that I did, for *Razorcake* and *Thrasher*), and original artwork. Japanese tour bill. Poster. CD. I don't think you could get anymore deluxe packaging. Broken Bottles deserves it. Think if Social Distortion didn't divorce themselves from *Mommy's Little Monster* and rebrand themselves Fonzie Americana For Retired Skinheads, but kept drinking in gutters and skating culverts. Sad part: Jes "The Mess" Rich died in 2010. He was in his early thirties. Jes was deeply troubled. His brother, Travis, visited him in the hospital. They made songs together on an acoustic guitar. It was therapy. Those songs eventually became Broken Bottles songs, some of the best Orange County punk to come out in the 2000s—2010s, in league with Smogtown and The Stitches. Travis is solid gold. He was the logistical mastermind and kept Broken Bottles on the rails when Jes was alive. He's keeping Jes's memory alive now that he's gone. I'm literally fighting back


tears and smiling when this record's spinning. Thanks, Travis. You're a lifer. This is important. —Todd Taylor (Bat Skates / TKO)

BROWN BOTTLE FLU: *Felt Up: CD*

Three-to-four chord co-ed garage from Indiana that sounds more or less like the Statics, were that band's residual Ramones-isms replaced by a sort of candy blues bent. I like the faster stuff better than the miscellaneous attempts at down 'n' dirtyism, but on the whole it's all kinda cool. Best of all, you can download it for free on the band's bandcamp site, and it's worth at least double that! BEST SONG: "Your Back" BEST SONG TITLE: "Boots on the Ground" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: This band comes right before Brownsville Station on my computer! —Rev Norb (Brown Bottle Flu, thebrownbottleflu.bandcamp.com)

CHEMICAL PEEL: *Bike Thief: 7"*

There is something reassuring about Chemical Peel. Each song is unique as the three-piece juggles vocal duties, which ensures that the band is never mercilessly pinned to one sound. Every strum and cymbal crash oozes earnestness. "Born to Kill" lumbers with terse shouts and a riff reminiscent of Big Boys. The guitars are abstract and asymmetrical, at once shrill and inventive while evolving from sections of dissonance into melodic riffage. With a shift in vocalists, they suddenly sound like an anarcho band, à la DIRT or Hagar The Womb, thanks to Ony and



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Victoria's gleeful voices. Chemical Peel is admirably carefree and confident with a fuck all attitude where punk means playing what you want and not thinking twice about it. —Sean Arenas (Ride The Snake, ridethesnakerrecords.com)

CHIXDIGGIT: *Double Diggits*: CD

Chixdiggit are a pop punk trio from Canada, the Great White North, the land of Neil Young and B.C. Bud. If you like the vein of chunky guitars and "I Don't Wanna"/"I Just Wanna"/"Now I Wanna" songs that run from the Ramones to The Queers and beyond, then you will connect with this release of "2 Pop Punk Classics on 1 CD," as the cover advertises. The albums in question here are 1998's *Born on the First of July* and 2000's *From Scene to Shining Scene*. There are also eight bonus tracks including "I'm Not Going to Suck Your Church Off," which wasn't as memorable as some of the classic tracks, but deserves an honorable mention for the title alone. —John Mule (Fat Wreck Chords)

COKE BUST / VACCINE: *Split*: 7"

The truth about this record is that you need it because it's one of the last Vaccine records that will be released (if I'm not mistaken, they are releasing one last 7" and then calling it quits). Vaccine produced some of the tensest and straightforward powerviolence of the last several years and these five tracks are a great addition to their catalog. The recording is heavy and blown out with the heaviest slow parts that run

straight into fucking insane speed. But it's not all blinding blast beats. Check out the killer rhythm on "Futureless," and the way the drums stress off-beats over power chords. The Coke Bust side is good powerviolence-y hardcore with well-written lyrics. The band certainly doesn't cover any new ground, but I've never really thought of Coke Bust as a band that pushed too many envelopes. They shred and play palatable heavy hardcore, which is probably the reason behind their status in the DIY hardcore scene. The breakdowns are good, the fast parts are tight, and the recording is great for their style. It's worth noting that the version of this that was sent to me through *Razorcake* is a European pressing that seems to be readily available in the U.S., but there is also a domestic pressing with different artwork that may be harder to track down here. —Ian Wise (Refuse, refuserecords.prv.pl)

CORPSE, THE:

Fight against Rules: LP

This rules. Hands down. *Fight Against Rules* is a collection of eleven songs of The Corpse's work from '88-'89, remastered and re-released as a CD in 2010, and now in the form of an LP. Originally formed in 1985 in communist-ruled Poland, The Corpse has been described as "hard core/trash/crossover," listing Suicidal Tendencies, Napalm Death, Septic Death, Accused, and Lärm—among others—as influences. It's really the best of both worlds between metal, thrash, and

hardcore punk, relentlessly propelling, shredding, pounding the shit out of your eardrums. It just doesn't let up! A bonus is a sixteen page booklet with a band bio, past reviews, an interview in English and Polish, and rad pictures of the crew to flip through, plus a print out of miscellaneous flyers from 1988-1994. Get it! —Camylle Reynolds (Refuse, refuserecords.prv.pl)

COUGS, THE: *Self-titled*: 7"

The Cougs play grainy, down-picked indie garage pop. Vocalist, Andrew Virga, reminds me of Andrew Savage's less nasally efforts in Teenage Cool Kids—that's a good thing. Virga is capable of vocalizing a lot of interesting melodies, but the songs nod off into tedium around the minute mark. There isn't much to musically sink your teeth in here, as it's just average slacker pop. The album design by Marsupial is eye-catching and abstract. —Sean Arenas (Bakery Outlet, rtdiem@yahoo.com, bakeryoutletrecords.com)

CRAZY ARM: *The Southern Wild*: CD/LP

Crazy Arm has previously flirted with a folk- and roots-based sound within its more standard anger-fuelled punk rock delivery, so it was no surprise to hear that the band was going to release an album which would eschew that more direct approach in favor of an acoustic-dynamic. The result is a joy to listen to with a more relaxed musical feel throughout, yet which lyrically retains the anti-war and "no god, no master" type sentiment that have permeated

Darren Johns's song writing for the band in the past but there is also a more personal edge within the songs as well. With a variety of tracks being served up, this never gets stale and it will take quite a stunning release to stop this being in my top five albums of 2013. —Rich Cocksedge (Xtra Mile, xtramilerecrodings.com)

CRIATURAS: *Espíritu de Libertad*: 12" EP

I will admit, I was not instantly blown away by this band. Seems a lot of folks are. But with more listens I found myself starting to "get it," and develop the opinion that Criaturas are pretty damn good. Musically, Criaturas crank out semi-speedy hardcore punk (emphasis on the punk here!) that recognizes the roots in the sense that they keep it raw and to the point. No polish and no frills. The songs are catchy. The mid-tempo bits help give the songs some weight and hold your attention. The drummer can bang, and I do like the basic approach in "Libertad O Muerte," since it's catchy, somewhat heavy, and gets inside your brain quickly. The vocals can be hard to take sometimes. When she's just shouting and shouting, the words tend to run together and there's not much distinction. Granted, songs like "Espíritu de Libertad" are raging, but when you have songs in the similar vein right after the other, it starts to blend. When she switches back and forth between shouting and singing, like in "Lobos en La Noche," "Asko," (which has lightening fast vocal delivery) and "Opresion," then


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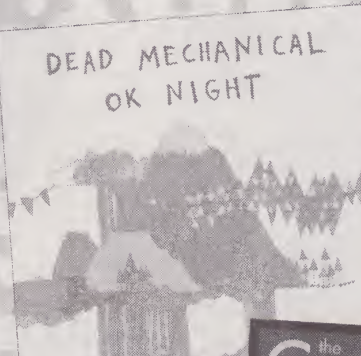
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the songs have more character. There's also the song "Invierno Nuclear," which is a bit different from the rest of the songs on the album. Though still driving, it's not as harsh in its approach. The vocals are a combination of sung and spoken, while the music pulls back a smidge. It's a pretty good decision, as it switches things up and accentuates the power they can generate with their songs. Something I'm really into is how these guys have a driving melodic sound, and at the same time there are some elements of bands like Discharge popping up here and there. I'm on board! —M.Avrq (Residue)

CRIMINAL TANGO:

W Granicach Rozsadku: LP

I don't know what I expected from this album, but I was wonderfully and pleasantly surprised from the moment it came on. From their description, Criminal Tango is "punk n' roll, rockabilly, swing and [the] style of an old Warsaw busker." The result is music you can drink and dance and sing along to, granted you speak Polish. While there are plenty of other bands like Criminal Tango trying to break out of punk's often rigid hard lines, this one is an original. —John Mule (No Pasaran, nopasaran.pl, nopasaran@nopasaran.pl)

D.O.A.: Welcome to Chinatown:

D.O.A. Live: CD

So this is the end. A legendary band steers the ship out for one more ride into the sunset. Joey "Shithead" Keithley and his band of merry men offer up

this blazing live disc to say goodbye. Recorded over three different nights at The Rickshaw Theatre in Vancouver, the sound is fantastic: twenty-eight barnburners covering the band's entire history. I hope Joey knows how much of an impact his music has had on the punk world. "This Machine Kills Fascists" and D.O.A did more than their fair share. Thank you. —Sean Koeppenick (Sudden Death)

DATA CONTROL: Self-titled: Cassette

Ten songs of cringing, flailing punk ala Career Suicide, Regulations, or even, dare I say, Christ On Parade, but also colder, more chilled somehow. More removed but still with that resoundings sense of paranoia. It's good stuff, actually. I mean, come on, with songs titles like "We Are the Rats" and "Get Up and Die," I was already halfway sold before I listened to the thing. Mine came on a repurposed ninety-minute book-on-tape in a language I don't understand, possibly Swedish, leaving me about eighty minutes to marvel at just how little I actually know. —Keith Rosson (Signaler Från Ovan)

DEATH BY STEAMSHIP: Facetious: 7"

I got Death By Steamship's first album, *S.S. Endurance*, to review a while back and I played it quite a bit. I really dug how the lyrics, sung in a spirited, almost spoken shout, dealt with the working class existence in the way it really is. The songs, alternating from angry screeds about the information age and jobs to a joyful celebrating of

life's simpler pleasures—like calling in sick with your lover or just kicking it with friends—have a droll, two-tears-in-a-bucket poetry. The music is engaging and shrewd post-hardcore. It wasn't until I went out and saw them that I realized that they're probably one of the most authentic bands in Seattle. They played their hearts out to a mostly empty room. Wearing ball caps and jeans, they could have been punks, but just as easily your co-worker. Their sound is unique and challenging, perhaps alienating Seattle's patched drunk punks, mook metal heads, and far too sincere and proletarian for the scenester, Boeing/Microsoft babies to take notice. The singer gave me this 7" that night after I introduced myself. It has the same feel—appreciation of small things like smoking cigarettes and reading Vonnegut on the porch. Righteous rage is spit towards butt-hurt, aggressive alpha males and negative jerkoffs who throw their weight around. Like their last release, it's relevant, compassionate, and bold music that's uncompromisingly inventive. —Craven Rock (Whoa! Boat, whoaboatrecords.com)

DEATH HYMN NUMBER 9:

3rd Degree Moon Burns: LP

This remarkably catchy garage rock album blew me away. Much faster than most bands of the genre and with a slight Dwarves influence, Death Hymn Number 9 is the most powerful garage punk band in ages. This is a record that will stand the test of time and will be

spinning on turntables for years and years. It's a major credit to Alternative Tentacles that they've found ways to continue to be a relevant record label after so many decades. I'm ecstatic to know that the folks who put out my all-time favorite record, the self-titled Crucifucks LP, are still releasing amazing albums. If they continue putting out bands like Death Hymn Number 9, there will never ever be a death hymn for Alternative Tentacles. —Art Ettinger (Alternative Tentacles)

DECAY AFTER DEATH:

System Fucking Bastards: EP

Decay After Death play a mix of hardcore and metal that brings to mind bands like Bad Influence, Amebix, COC, Nausea, and the like. Songs are somewhat complex with different time changes throughout each song. There's some soloing here and there, a delay effect on the vocals to make their sound a little more expansive, and the metal side gives these songs a darker and bleaker tone. It works well by backing up like-minded lyrics of a broken system, a bankrupt society, and the drudgery of daily existence. Not the best record of this style, but at least they're attempting to say something beyond "the scene sucks, dude." —M.Avrq (Cowabunga, cowabungarecords.com)

DEFIANCE: OHIO: The Calling: 12" 45

Is this a failure on NPR's music director's behalf? Why isn't Def:OH being transmitted on radio waves coast

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to coast? Here's my pitch, coconut water toboggan patron. Defiance: Ohio are poetic. They don't swear (on this 12", for sure) but they question the government (yet don't come across as libertarian dooshbags who want to hand education over to Wal-Mart and the national parks to Exxon.) The music's clear and confident. They're pretty-sounding. No confusing or potentially listener-angering, pledge-drive-ending distortion. There's a violin played pertly, sometimes harrowingly. Listen carefully once and you've pretty much got all the lyrics bagged. High production values. Sparse but lush. Precise botanical line drawings of modern protest songs, akin to the Weakerthans, gardened by Billy Bragg. They're undeniably catchy and teach new words. ("Prehension" is an interaction of a subject with an event or entity that involves perception but not necessarily cognition. Chew on that for a bit.) Endnote: when I'm drained or sick and don't want to be blasted by music, Defiance: Ohio are like a nice cup of nice. I don't say that derisively. Mellow, yet meaningful. They're uplifting. Serious. No back hand to that compliment. —Todd Taylor (No Idea)

DELPHINES, THE: "Panic" b/w "Uptown Lover": 7"

Little bitty guitars doing a rapid-fire ding-ding-ding-ding-ding-ding inside my skull like mice with jackhammers, vocals that sound like they're coming out of the mouth of a Strawberry Shortcake® doll without pupils, and a drummer who left his

cymbals in the gig bag out by the dumpster and couldn't care less about retrieving them. Although "Panic" is clearly labeled parenthetically as the "single," it's the also-helpfully-denoted "demo," "Uptown Lover," that had me doing a double-take ((on the completely unexpected line "I'm a sex-crazed dope fiend!", no less)). I think the word for which we're all striving here is "keen!" **BEST SONG:** "Uptown Lover" **BEST SONG TITLE:** "Panic" **FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT:** Recorded on Guy Fawkes' Night ((uncredited))! —Rev Nørð (Thread Pull, threadpullrecords.com)

DEMERITS, THE: Shake It 7"

Title track is a primal stomper long on attitude and short on pretense. Flip is along the same lines, with lyrics providing a snapshot of life in a band. —Jimmy Alvarado (Mooster)

DEINZ TEK: Detroit: CD

Ex-Radio Birdman guitarist hits the deck running on his second solo album. "Pine Box" grinds some gears in the Stooges chassis, but from there Tek takes a U-turn. It's still rock, but with more of a blues edge around the corners. "Can of Soup" and "Perfect World" are stand-outs, but playing *Detroit* while driving on a dusty highway in the desert would make a hell of a lot of sense. Solid musicianship by all the players here and well thought out songs make this record feel like a well of cold water that thirsty music lovers can come back to anytime. —Sean Koepnick (Career, careerrecords.com)

DIE ROTZ / THE BASTARD SONS OF MARVIN HIRSCH: Split: 7" EP

Die Rotz: one garage punk ditty and a smokin', swaggering dose o' raunchy rock'n'roll. No frills, just pure rockin'. Bastard Sons Of Marvin Hirsch: a double dose of tasty trash recalling the seedier side of the early '80s punk stuff. Nice split. —Jimmy Alvarado (Go Ape)

DOT DASH:

Half-Remembered Dream: CD

Remember when bands like The Jam and The Buzzcocks could balance a punk edge with a pop sensibility like a juggler with fifty bowls on their head riding a unicycle? Well, Dot Dash does. The emphasis here is on songs, and the band delivers on their third album. Songs like "Bloom/Decay" and "Shopworn Excuse" feature soaring harmonies and chiming guitars. Don't forget the rhythm section, which is nimble and authoritative, sometimes all in the same chorus! Don't go underground without Dot Dash in your playlist. —Sean Koepnick (Beautiful Music)

DREAM DECAY: NV/NV/NV: LP

Anyone familiar with Iron Lung Records will know their penchant for unpleasant, difficult noise, whether it's the blazing thrash of No Statik or the fucked up blast weirdness of Iron Lung themselves. I love the label and respect how they push the boundaries, but just could not hang with this disc on any level. Discordant, fucked up noise sludge. Tricky time signatures, vocals buried under a seething mass

of noise. This record made me seaisick and nervous. It took four attempts to get through it. I understand noise as a feeling, but this is way out there for me. Fans of Iron Lung, Lightning Bolt, and weird fucking vibes take note. —Tim Brooks (Iron Lung, ironlungrecords, bigcartel.com)

EX-CULT: Mr. Fantasy: 7"

Ex-Cult is Goner Records' current hot band. I don't know how to describe the themes of their songs—haunted, obsessive, paranoid? Let's go with all three. I still don't know how to genre type them or even what to call them. Post-punk? But if I don't like post-punk, how can I like Ex-Cult? I've seen Ex-Cult twice, a year apart. Regular touring has made them much tighter, more propulsive, and wilder on stage. I think that is how Ex-Cult wants to be, but I'm having some trouble getting that feeling just from listening to their records. The mix on this 7" seems a little less muddy than last year's full length. It seems like the singer's voice has deepened a bit too. A little more low-end punch might be all they need. Goner is a good home for these Memphis cats, but I can totally see Total Punk putting out a future 7". —Sal Lucci (Goner)

FAIRBANKS: Eat This Record: CDEP

Fairbanks is a pop punk trio from Dallas, Texas, a city I would not normally associate with the genre. *Eat This Record* digs deep, mining the same vein which catapulted many



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'90s bands into the limelight and made pop punk an ever-so-brief part of mainstream culture. I don't know if Fairbanks will have the same success of their forebears, but their influences are unmistakable. —Paul J. Comeau (Urban Scandal)

FERAL TRASH: *Dead Eyes: 7"*

Canada is the place to be, it would seem, or at least it is if you like good music. So much of what I like these days seems to come from north of the U.S.A. border and Feral Trash is no exception. With a no-nonsense and edgy mid-tempo approach, this trio provides four bundles of warm fuzzy goodness, all of which give me the impression of a band midway between Low Culture and Royal Headache. —Rich Cocksedge (Dirt Cult, dirtcultrecords@gmail.com, dirtcultrecords.com)

FINAL CONFLICT:

Nineteen Eighty-Five: LP

Jeez, I must've seen these cats about a billion times back in the glory/gory days of Fender's Ballroom in Long Beach. As I recall, they were one of a few bands that marked a line in the sand between some of the older punks who didn't like the increasingly stratified—and increasingly metal, with all the stupid mentality in tow—direction punk/hardcore was going, and the younger crowd coming up who were often only interested in shit they could slamdance to. Like fellow locals Dissension, Final Conflict's sound hinted at the thrash-influenced metal

direction a lot of bands were veering towards back then, yet they managed to keep both feet and lyrical subject matter firmly planted in the anarcho-hardcore of bands like Crucifix and Discharge. Collected here is their first demo, recorded in the titular year employing the primitive ways and means that were the norm back then. The sound here's only slightly muffled (we're talking about recordings that date back some twenty-eight years, you know) but the tunes, some of which made it onto their ripping *Ashes to Ashes* LP are choice cuts of tight, breakneck-paced thrash and angry rants about war, the system, and other assorted subjects that remain too uncomfortably topical. —Jimmy Alvarado (540, chaosintejas.com/540)

FLAG OF DEMOCRACY: 23: LP

Another immaculate, borne-from-love reissue of 1988's "*17 Punk Anthems from Flag of Democracy*" from SRA (sticker, download code, color vinyl, and an alternative cardstock sleeve/poster). And that alternate cover got me thinking. The cover on the outside's high contrast black and white. Live band mayhem—blurred and stark. The inner cover's saturated in bright colors. The band's posed and candid, happy, smiling, waving, and inviting. The drummer has the tips of his sticks up his nose. They look like goofs. When bands try to pull this off—the skeletal bleakness of bumper-based "reality" politics balanced with, "Hey, we're humans who fart and go on vacations"—most fail. Only the

really adept bands don't get stuck in the cul-de-sac of too-specific politics where it's almost impossible to not be dated. (My headspace for positive comparisons would be Hüsker Dü, Minutemen, and JFA [for the instrumental].) Don't get me wrong, FOD rage. This isn't the Dickies (who are awesome for completely different reasons). Anxiety and malice radiates stink lines when 23 spins. Twenty-five years later, it still makes squares and people who use irons on their clothes poop their pants from sheer force and the thousands upon thousands of notes played in a relatively short time. Blast this on the street and watch the SUVs and expensive cars scatter away, like cockroaches from cucumbers (the only thing cockroaches won't eat). FOD's a rare bird that can both be serious and wink-wink-y, fast yet intricate, all without being predictable or turning into a mushy blur. It's punk. It's as catchy as it's fast, and I like it a whole bunch. —Todd Taylor (SRA)

FLATLINERS, THE: *Dead Language: CD*

Melodic punk from Ontario, Canada with high production values as has become the standard with Fat releases. The first song sounds dead-on like a No Use For A Name song who at one point sounded just like NOFX (I'm starting to see a pattern here). The rest of the album just seems to follow along with passionate vocals, anthemic choruses, and the occasional uneventful breakdown. However, I tend to prefer the more human-sounding

bands who allow themselves to fuck up a drum part or forget a bass note to the ones who streamline the quality of their music according to mainstream standards. Needless to say, this album just wasn't meant for a jerk like me. —Juan Espinosa (Fat)

FOOTBALL, ETC.: *Audible: CD*

I guess if you *really* miss Rainer Maria and Caithlin DeMarris's vocals, this eleven-song, thirty-minute album is your next logical step. Then again, sometimes I miss Rainer Maria (they always put on a good live show and I have some fond memories associated with their music), but even this was a bit too similar for me. —Kurt Morris (Count Your Lucky Stars, cylsrecords.com)

FORWARD: *War Nuke and Death Sentence: LP*

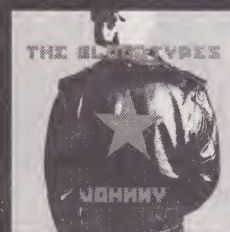
Legendary Japanese band Forward return with their first release since 2004's *Burn Down the Corrupt Justice* LP. Based in Tokyo, Forward have been mainstays for nearly twenty years, and show no sign of slowing down. *War Nuke and Death Sentence* introduces a new drummer to the fold, but maintains the furious sound that carved Forward's place in hardcore punk. Their twin guitar attack allows for some catchy riffs and insane solos, which, when combined with the thundering low end rhythms of their bassist and drummer, creates the ideal backdrop for vocalist Ishiya's gravel-throated growls. I've loved this band for a while, and this



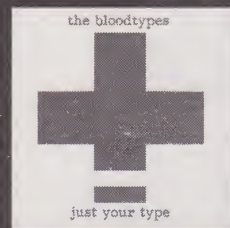
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release is a great addition to their catalog. —Paul J. Comeau (Prank, fw@forward1996.com)

FOXFIRES: *The Golden Age: 7"*

I've seen Foxfires live several times, but this was my first time experiencing them on recording. This 7" does an excellent job of capturing their live sound. This is a record sure to inspire as much moshing and sing-alongs at home as Foxfires inspire at their shows. What really makes Foxfires for me is not just that they rock musically, but lyrically. Vocalist Josh Lyford is a solid performer on the mic, and his almost stream-of-consciousness lyrics tackle themes that are deeply personal, expressed in poetic terms that gives Foxfires a gravitas the music alone can't quite convey. I dug this record from the start, but I enjoyed it even more after repeated listens as I picked up on the lyrics. —Paul J. Comeau (Escapist, escapist-records.com, foxfireshc@gmail.com)

FULL SUN:

High Ceiling Bare Floor: Cassette

This compiles the first two tapes by Jeff Grant's solo project, Full Sun. "High Ceiling" is a bit punkier, with the left field dubby elements in their own songs. "Bare Floor" begins to integrate the low-fi studio trickery into the indie-inflected punk. The end result is in the middle of a Marked Men, Lee Perry, Guided By Voices triangle. Fifteen songs total. —Chris Terry (Houseplant)

FULL SUN: *Stay Awake: 7"*

Jeff Grant crafts catchy songs without big choruses, sneaking the hooks into guitar lines and the vocal melodies at the ends of verses. He honed that skill in his old band, Pink Razors, and is really killing it with his solo project, Full Sun. The pace on these three songs is a little slower than that on his first two releases, and the hooks have more room to breathe. It's like a melodic punk scratch-off ticket, the record needle flaking away layers of fuzz and sound effects to reveal prize songs. —Chris Terry (Let's Pretend)

GASMASK TERROR: *17101961: 7" EP*

I imagine some will howl to the contrary, and there are definitely exceptions (Metal Urbain comes to mind), but by my recollections is that France has never much been a consistent hotbed of quality punk and especially hardcore. This definitely falls into the "exception" pile. You get four tracks of Discharge-inspired hardcore with a ferocity that is more akin to Scandinavian bands like Totalitär than the band upon which the template is built. In short, quite impressive. —Jimmy Alvarado (Solar Funeral)

GENERACION SUICIDA:

Con La Muerte a Tu Lado: LP

This is some pretty great punk rock hailing from the belly of the beast, South Central L.A. When you come from a place like that and look at life through a second generation immigrant's eyes, the world can feel like a really fucked up place. This is because the world, or

at least many of the isolated worlds that exist within L.A., are truly fucked. Isolation, boredom, racism, poverty, desperation, and madness—it's all on this slab of plastic. The noise made to vent these emotions is what keeps the insanity at bay. Musically, it's very much in the vein of Masshysteri if you ask me, "the Mexican version of The Vicious" if you ask others. You get the idea if you're a fan of either. Eleven tracks that keep it short and sweet on white vinyl with sick artwork. The dual male/female vocals really give it that extra pop. It's so simple, melodic, and well-played you really can't help digging this record. Get ready to move your hips and learn some Spanglish. —Rene Navarro (Going Underground)

GET DEAD: *Bad Dead: CD*

Given that this is a Fat Wreck Chords product that appears to be intentionally designed to give the impression that it might be a Goner Records product, I feared the worst. The truth is that this record is actually pretty interesting—it's quite well-produced (and not in a sucky way, either) and the band's varied instrumentation is surely more thought-provoking that I ((admittedly unfairly)) was expecting ((when was the last time you heard anybody actually rock the mandolin??)). That said, I've really found that the whole tattooed-and-raspy-voiced-and-hard-but-sensitive-proletarian-punk-poet ((who likes the Pogues and Johnny Cash! Don't forget the Johnny Cash!)) trying-to-communicate-

the-profound-sorrow-which-lies-at-the-bottom-of-his-whiskey-glass songwriting point of view lost whatever tenuous grip it might have ever had on my interest well over two decades ago ((which, to be fair, does not necessarily imply that it's an invalid perspective)), so I'm gonna leave this one to the guys who wear the little cab driver hats down to the bar. Still, a commendable effort. BEST SONG: "The Process" BEST SONG TITLE: "Kerouac's Teeth" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: There are thirty-eight lines of "thank you's" in the liner notes, and two lines of R.I.P.s. —Rev Nørð (Fat)

GREBER / HIROSHIMA VACATION:

Split: 7"

Nothing stands out here, just two bands playing discordant, fast-slow-fast, angry hardcore/grind, bordering on powerviolence. I hate to be dismissive, but there's not much here for fans of old school punk to latch onto. If you love '90s style hardcore/grind and need something new to crush posers to, this might be your bag. If you're looking for actual songs, not so much. —Chad Williams (Suburban Whitetrash, suburbanwhitetrashrecords.com)

H.D.Q.: *"Hand Me Downs" b/w "Toronto": 7"*

Welcome return by one of the bands that defined my youth. This English band was one of the more melodic bands amid a sea of thrash in the late '80s. Taking cues from Dag Nasty to



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begin with and then becoming ever more melodic until their breakup in the early '90s. Three quarters of the band went on to form Leatherface with Frankie Stubbs and members played in bands such as Generic, the Jones, amongst others. This release is a fantastic return to form, still keeping a DC edge with a dash of Hüsker Dü, but adding a '90s, '00s U.K. vibe. While the influences are clearly American, the sound is so English, mining territory this band pioneered but others like Snuff, Southport, and Blocko emulated. Wonderful stuff. —Tim Brooks (Boss Tuneage, boss-tuneage.com)

HAPPY NOOSE: *Amagosa: 7"*

Huh. Definitely an overwhelming sense of goth punk with this one. Ominous Bauhaus-inspired vocals and droning chords that sound like synths but are probably guitars. Think of a less ferocious Lost Tribe and you're getting there. Didn't quite connect with me personally, but I can't say these aren't an atmospheric batch of songs. —Keith Rosson (Happy Noose)

HARD FEELINGS: *Swell...: LP*

Apparently, Doc Corbin Dart or Paul Curran is leading a small-musical-instrument-wielding Warriors-type gang of East Bay via South Florida punks through the slush-covered streets of Duluth, Minnesota. If that sounds like your kind of uproar, *Swell...* will not disappoint. Oddball nasal vocals howling out personal grass-isn't-always-greener lyrics over jangling

guitar and crashing drums. The lyrics border on stream-of-consciousness, but contain just enough one-line nuggets to be relatable ("But by the end of these nights when we feel alright only to wake and it's all forgot"—"Bright Side of Life"). Do Ya Hear We? festers got graced with a Hard Feelings set this year, which puts a lot of context around which side of the punk bread their butter is on. Re-purposed screen printed covers and a Xeroxed one page lyric sheet round out this superb release. Like Rembrandt, I'm ready to follow the Hard Feelings gang into enemy territory and leave their tag on every available wall. —Matt Seward (Plan-It-X, plan-it-x.com / Starcleaner, star-cleaner.com / Lost Cat, lostcatrecords.org)

HEADIES: *Meta-Pop: LP*

RIYL on your one sheet? Ugh. But I'll roll with it. Want some keyboard with your Weasel? Headies can give you a couple of those. "Please Kill Me," "Kelly Wears Keds," and "Meta-Pop" are solid fun, might even cause some spontaneous tighty-whitey dancing around the turntable. There are some Thunders-type vocal inflections and riffs on some of the other songs that don't fit. Maybe fun live? And three cover songs? Please. —Matt Seward (Square Of Opposition)

HEALTH CARE:

"U2 Me" b/w "Lies!": 7"

This is a two-song teaser from Health Care, the brainchild of Dan Bush, formerly of Thee Makeout Party. The

approach is in such lo-fi fashion that it distorts the lines of power pop and twee with searing vocals and strategic use of unconventional rock instruments like the glockenspiel and a farfisa organ. Nevertheless, the songs are quite endearing and could be much more memorable if not for their brevity/quantity. I'll be paying attention if a full-length drops. —Juan Espinosa (King Song)

HIRED GOONS: *Demo: Cassette*

86 Mentality style oi-influenced hardcore from Canada with those good Sheer Terror-style vocals. The recording is a little spotty (vocals and cymbals overtake the mix), but the songs are good and it is just a demo tape. There are these really cool, very minimal guitar overdubs on the tracks that on a better recording would stand out a lot better and show some good rethinking of the basic "one-two power chord riff" that will fare these guys well later on. The last song, "Red & Black," is the slowest of the bunch and while I can't make out much of the lyrics, it has a really good ominous and paranoid-sounding vibe to it. This was pretty limited and I think that when the label sent it to me they were already running really low, but this is definitely a band worth looking into for future releases. —Ian Wise (Nobody Cult, nobodycult.bigcartel.com)

HOLLOW HILLS: *She Said Die: 7"*

Ah, yes. Spooky surf music. Cramps comparisons are easy, but this isn't so cookie cutter that I'd stop there. Think

The Ghastly Ones, El Ray, etc., but less camp and with a bit more punk structure, almost Murder City Devils-esque in terms of actual songwriting and dynamics. Cool stuff that I bet rips live. —Dave Williams (Hot Trash, hottrashrecords.bigcartel.com)

HOLOPAW: *"Golden Sparklers" b/w "Yearlings Darlings": 7"*

All of my alarm bells are going off. Ding! Ding! Ding! High alert! Be careful! Super-pretty playing. Clean, enunciated, sung male voice. Careful instruments. Ultra-clear recording. It's such a slippery slope to Dave Matthews, Indigo Girls, Maroon 5 (I'm just naming stuff that I think blows and have been exposed to more than I care for; it's a limited exposure and unfair to Holopaw. I agree.). But there's something in Holopaw that makes me not hate it (besides Replay Dave's recommendation), that makes me think that they're on to something that reclaims some of the bad memories/horrible bands playing on radio waves/satellite/whatever today's technology is. Holopaw are pretty-sounding, but have verve and a low-burning fire. My toes tap along. They sound delicate and precise, but not fragile. This is a tough sell between listening to the welcome slashings of Neighborhood Brats and Flag Of Democracy, but I'll give 'em their due. Indie rock done well. —Todd Taylor (Wild Kindness)

INDIAN DREAM: *Orca: CD*

Music needs context. The context can come from anything, which is

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why, like art, it is so subjective. I recently read a review of this reissue in another punk rag that totally panned it as hippy music. What was missing for that reviewer was the context this band came from. Indian Dream was around in the late '80s/early '90s on the tail end of the anarcho movement. This was the era I went to see bands like Indian Dream, City Indians, Oi Polloi, and the like play with other like-minded punks at squats and punk venues around England. This reissue compiles their only LP and EP, both of which are melodic, tuneful anarcho punk with female vocals in the vein of Lost Cherees, Internal Autonomy, Omega Tribe, and the Mob. Along with the traditional sounds of anarcho punk, this band also has influences of the era, most notably the shimmery guitar which sounds like The Wonder Stuff. Taken out of context, the songs about whales complete with whale sounds and slow ballads seem laughable, but at the time of handmade zines, hunt sabbing, and dreadlocks this all made perfect sense. This is a tough one to recommend as the sound is so linked to my memories I can't tell if this fantastic or ridiculous. Whatever, I love it. Now go get your own memories. —Tim Brooks (Boss Tuneage, bosstuneage.com)

INERTIA: *New Lows to Bear upon a Barren Earth*: Cassette

This tape starts out twinkly and pretty, making me a little worried I was in for a wimp ride. Not the case whatsoever. It keeps that part short and sweet, moving

on to a total ripper. It's fast as fuck with some layered and gang vocals spread throughout. In the middle you get a moshdown with some sick pinch harmonics. Stressed out, stern vocals urge you to realize the end of our shit existence is coming soon. Second and third tracks give you more of the same with a bit more of a rock feel not unlike Damnation A.D. The last song is a roll around on the ground rager. The drums are definitely getting knocked over and the singer is going to need a tissue. The packaging for this tape is awesome—intricately scored and folded into a self-closing box and professionally printed on both sides. As someone who works in the print industry, I know this thing was not cheap by any means. Great job, boys! —Adam Mullett (Baldy Longhair, baldylonghair@gmail.com)

JADED EYES: *Gods and Monsters*: CD

What year is this again? H.D.Q. are back together and now we get an offering from this new U.K. band, sounding like H.D.Q. of old? What? I try not to live in the past, but I'm digging this time machine. Faultless DC-inspired hardcore with more than a nod to Articles Of Faith, Dag Nasty, and Government Issue ("Jaded Eyes" is a GI song). I always say age doesn't matter, and sometimes being older in a band gives chops and experience the younger whipper snappers don't have. Members of this Leeds band spent time in John Holmes and Voorhees, so these fucks have definitely done their time. I bet these dudes smash it live.

Yet another banger from our friends at Boss Tuneage. —Tim Brooks (Boss Tuneage, bosstuneage.com)

JAHBREAKER:

When It Pains It Roars, Mon: 7" EP

Areggae-themed-and-executedpisstake on Rastafarianism, Northern California hippie culture, and the endless pursuit of being stoned. —Jimmy Alvarado (Silver Sprocket, silversprocket.net)

KITTEN FOREVER: *Pressure*: CD

This is a solid thirteen songs with high-energy female vocals and catchy sing-along choruses. There are no guitars; the bass player carries the melody, switching between clean and heavily distorted tones. The drumming is primal. The singer has a severe, overdriven wail with a hint of a party attitude. Nice one for fans of Bratmobile, which I am. Works for me. —Billups Allen (Guilt Ridden Pop, guiltiddenpop.com)

LEBAKKO: *Popkornikauppa*: 12" EP

Raw, sloppy garage punk from Finland with clean guitars, melodic bass lines and vocals sung in Finnish. At its best on songs like "Jäätelökesä" ("Ice Cream Summer"), Lebakko nails some melodies that, even if vaguely familiar, totally work with the energetic music that lies beneath. I'd never dock points for singing in a native tongue, but when you can't understand the words, the focus tends to be on the vocal melody and how it melds with the music. Unfortunately, Lebakko don't

pull it off as well as some other recent Scandinavian bands (Masshysteri and Tristess come to mind). Not taking full advantage of the recording process, the record is littered with badly off-key vocals. Perhaps endearing in a live setting, but not on record. In fact, this sounds like a live record, sans crowd noise. And I'd bet that if you cranked this up in an above-average temperature room, closed your eyes and sipped on a tall can in a paper bag, you'd swear you were at a basement show and loving every minute of it. That's the environment where I bet this band really works, though I'd take a 7" with the aforementioned "Jäätelökesä." It's hot. Ice cream, please. —Chad Williams (PML, pikakelauksellamaailmanloppuun@gmail.com / Mutant, gopaperboygo@hotmail.com)

LEMURIA:

***The Distance Is So Big*: CD/LP**

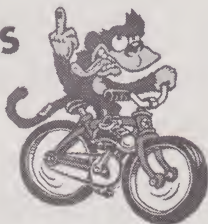
Until I saw Lemuria live just over a year ago, I had the band pegged as a pop punk trio that seemed to be quite popular with younger indie music fans. The live experience, however, opened my ears to a sound that was less conventional than I had imagined, and which sent me reeling a bit, given how so intense the performance was. I was instantly sold. The *Distance Is So Big* is Lemuria's third album and it continues the upward trajectory that each subsequent release has taken over its predecessor. It is packed with a plethora of hummable tunes that

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are instantly infectious. The ace in the pack with Lemuria is the highly effective percussion courtesy of Alex Kearns, who uses his drums more as an instrument than just something to keep time with. It's reminiscent of Burning Airlines and perhaps it's no surprise that J Robbins has produced this and the band's previous long player, as there are definitely similarities to be heard between both bands. The other major plus point would be Sheena Ozzella's vocals which are, at times, beautifully paper thin, working in tandem with those of Kearns, whose voice is more one dimensional, yet highly listenable. And without a doubt, "Public Opinion Bath" is easily one of my favorite songs of the year, although it is one of many gems on the album. —Rich Cocksedge (Bridge 9)

LIGHT BEARER: Silver Tongue: 2 x LP

Epic doom crust. Listening to this reminds me of bands like Ambush, where if you take the time to listen to this closely, and allow yourself to focus solely on the music, then you will get a lot out of it. The songs are heavy, multilayered, and, as a whole, they create a mood of impending gloom and doom. There are moments of quiet, then times where the songs are churning and exploding. "Amalgam" is a complete crusher. There are the guitars playing off one another, and I really like the way one guitar is adding another layer in the middle of the song, adding to the mood, and how the tempo is building tension that never lets up. Then

how it gives way to the contrasting "Matriarch," allowing the quiet to come in and room for introspection as well as preparation for the brewing storm. The cello and violin help anchor it down and underscore the tone. The theme to this album is centered around Christianity and the sexist image of women it tends to promote. Lyrically, it's presented almost as a conversation between lucifer and Eve. For me, the writing is dense, and something, like the music, you have to spend time with and focus on it completely to "get it." It's kind of like a book, but it's only an album. The first couple times I put this album on was more as a quick listen and background noise, which this is not geared toward at all. There's a lot here to take in, spend time with, and discover. —M.Avrq (Halo of Flies, halooffiesrecords.com)

LIQUOR STORE: In the Garden: CD

Sometimes I listen to this record and hear "Pile of Dirt" and "Big Wheels" and imagine it's from a future where the Dictators don't come into existence until the time of the DC Comics graphic novel *Kingdom Come*, where the irresponsible superheroes of the modern generation do little but wreak untold havoc with their constant brawling. Sometimes I hear the boink-boink-boink piano in "Keys to the Face" and imagine I'm listening to a strip club Stooges with knuckle tattoos. Sometimes I hear "Titty Was Loc'd" and it sounds like an "All the Young Dudes" for a demographic so idiosyncratic

as to render it functionally inert for humanity's perusal. But mostly I listen to this record and think about the time I tried to find pot for A.O.D., rather unsuccessfully if memory serves. *The New Jerseyest band of all time!!!* BEST SONG: "Satin Dollars" BEST SONG TITLE: "Pile of Dirt" FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Recorded on my birthday! —Rev Nørð (Almost Ready, almostreadyrecords.com)

LOPEZ, THE: Fur: 7" EP

Three songs of noise pop from a duo from Pittsburgh, PA featuring Stephenwolf on vocals/synth, and Jesse Lopez on guitar/vocals/programming. Lots of fuzz, energy, and noise that fills every corner of this single. Every bit is a thing of beauty. The songs are fun, full of hooks, and played with so much joy that it spills out of the speakers and puts a smile on my face. They kind of remind me of the B-52's if they were less pop, added noise, and kept the female vocals instead of using the male vocals as the lead. (The Lopez mostly use Stephenwolf as the lead singer on this release with Jesse Lopez taking up background vocals to great effect.) A very cool single that I couldn't stop playing. —Rick Ecker (Self-released, thelopeztheband@gmail.com)

LOPEZ, THE: Fur: 7" EP

Noisy pop kind thing here with a bit of snotty punk edge (mainly in the vocals). A little bit of feedback, some fuzz, and three upbeat songs that profess their love of felines (yes, you read that

right). "Furriest One" sounds like a cross between Hunx And His Punx and Big Eyes, but with the din of distortion. The B side has the better songs on here—"Kingdom of Cat Piss" and "Fur Babies." These two are more direct and to the point with a heavier beat and forceful vocals over a driving bass and noisy blarps from a guitar. Comes on translucent pink vinyl that looks *perdy* when held up to the light. I'm as amused by how the light is captured in the record as a cat is entertained by a human moving a beam from a flashlight along the floor. —M.Avrq (The Lopez, thelopeztheband@gmail)

LOVE CHANNEL / FEMTEKOLONNARE: Split 7"


Both of the bands on this split record play fast, crazy, terrific European hardcore with a suddenly retro vibe. Sounding like they'd fit in well on a bill with Charles Bronson in the 1990s, there's nothing to not love here. Both sides are well recorded and this record should be cropping up through stateside distributors by the time this review is published. Don't let their cute names fool you. These bands are *hard*. —Art Ettinger (Vulgar)

MALLWALKERS:

Shake the Rust Off: LP

Stompy garage rock with a horn section, two singers and the tendency to feel like an R&B record at times. Perhaps it's more economical to say that this is a funk punk/Big Boys kind of thing. The vocals are very harsh






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compared to the music, but there's a lot of originality in the essence of these songs. Warrants multiple listens, even if it's just to get past the amount of music that has to be processed. Grade: B+. —Bryan Static (Peterwalkee, peterwalkeerecords.com)

MANDATES, THE: Self-titled: LP

Ignorance is bliss. Except, of course, when it comes to music. Sometimes, you miss out on cool shit. Which, in turn, is even worse for its creators; quality songs go unnoticed day after day, failing to make it into the hands of the right people. The Mandates, already extremely well-received in Western Canada, are just beginning to crack the shell of the rest of the globe. A band so sharp, that even though their songs are chock full of hooks (this band is nothing *but* hooks), when you catch them live, the entire set is spent watching them feed off each other, focusing on how truly talented each member is. The sheer technical ability of this group is mesmerizing. And, let's be clear: we're talking slick, punk-fueled, power pop. A subgenre that already has no room for imperfections. You need to be competent—tight as all fucking hell. And well, these guys fit right in. Now, while these Albertans fit right in with their obvious Canadian counterparts (Tranzmitters, White Wires, Sonic Avenues, Statues, and so on), there's something inherently different about them. The aforementioned groups have a reputation for sounding Canadian, while The Mandates sound like they're

from New York. I mean, don't get me wrong, they still sound *a lot* like their Canuck brothers. But, I'd be more inclined to compare The Mandates to the New York Dolls, the Sorrows, the Dictators and maybe even the Stitches, at times. But, faster and even, dare I say, tighter. More Dead Boys than Pointed Sticks, if you catch my drift. Bands get looked over every day out of laziness, oversaturation, and new trends. The Mandates are beyond worthy of your time. Given half a chance, you'll be singing the outro-chorus to "She's Walkin' Over" over, and over, and over, again. —Steve Adamyk (Mammoth Cave, mammothcaverecording.com)

MANDROIDS, THE: Demo: Cassette

Eleven songs of sci-fi-influenced punk out of Baltimore from a band that often dons homemade Mandroid suits when playing live, adding to the weird factor of the music. I don't like describing bands as "fun" because it seems like something Aunt Martha would call the cover band she saw at the Elks lodge last night, but it fits here. I hope they tour out to Portland. They would fit in great with the garage rock bands here. Musically, they're in the vein of 1977 style punk, but The Mummies and other bands of that ilk are unavoidable references mostly because of song titles like "Jet Pack Boys" and "Messy Face." Keeping with the budget rock feel, the tape is a dubbed sixty-minute Maxell tape and the label is adhered with clear tape. A photocopied, one-sided insert with the contact info

written in blue pen on the inside. I have a feeling these dudes aren't in high school, but it looks like some of my eleventh grade handiwork. Impressive in its lack of detail. Impressive in music quality. —Adam Mullett (Hellicarrier, mandroids@gmail.com)

MARTIN: The Worst Part: 7"

Fuck me. I was not expecting to love this. Opening with a *Shock 'Em Dead* quote was wild enough (one of my all-time favorite movies), but then tearing into some top-notch, '90s-esque melodic/pop punk that immediately brought Sinkhole/Doc Hopper/Zoinks/Sicko/(plus the requisite Berkeley nods) to mind, but with a more urgent, lethal sound... fuuuck. I am *loving* this. Ex-Spraynards dudes who know exactly what they're doing. Get on this shit. —Dave Williams (De Nada / Square Of Opposition, squareofopposition.com)

MAXIES, THE:

Greenland Is Melting: LP

Joke pop punk of the Ramones-derived variety centered around a "Greenland" theme. This appears to be a reissue with some additional tracks added on. If Darlington was ever part of yer playlist, this'll do ye just right. —Jimmy Alvarado (It's Alive)

MEGA GEM: Colors of the West: CD

First off, this is not a punk album. This is straight Americana/folk/alt rock. There is no doubt that Modest Mouse has influenced Mega Gem through and through. There are hints of pop punk

scattered here and there, but it is fleeting at most. I'm not really sure quite how to review such an album, since I do not know much about Americana nor do I like it very much. However, *Colors of the West* is not without some charm; it's melodic, has diverse instruments: hand bells, ukuleles, various horn instruments, mandolins, banjos, cellos, heavy use of gang vocals, even a little girl singing on one track. Really, it goes on and on. It's amateurish and a bit sludgy at times. I can imagine it's an epic ordeal getting everyone on stage to perform live, or even to get the studio time and space needed to produce this album. *Colors of the West* is decidedly unpunk, but hey, if you like Americana or folk alt. with all the frills, this might be your jam. —Camylle Reynolds (Wild Baby, wildbabyrecords.com)

MEKA LEKA HI'S, THE: Self-titled: LP

This Buena Park, CA trio rules, first because their name is a *Pee-wee's Playhouse* reference, and second, because their music is really damn catchy. I was hoping for something sweet from this, based on the name of the band and the absurd cover art of flying teeth and a toothless kid holding a hammer. It didn't disappoint—garage-y punk'n'roll with strong hooks and slightly nonsensical lyrics. There's also a '50s surf guitar vibe on several tracks, particularly "The Stuff," which was a mostly instrumental track that I really dug. Every riff on this LP was a potential earworm. It could have been an entirely instrumental album



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and I would not have been the least bit disappointed. The lyrics add a touch of entertainment value, like "Just for Me," which is written from the perspective of a kid who doesn't want to share his things. I thought the Meka Leka Hi's were great from the start, but their absurd humor really pushes them over the top. —Paul J. Comeau (Meka Leka Hi's, themekalekahis.bandcamp.com, jmagranniii@yahoo.com)

MIGHTY FEVERS, THE: *Fuck'in Great R'n'R: LP*

This album stands up to its name: it is fucking great rock and roll. The songs come out of the speakers like electric shock therapy. They are loud, fast, and spirited. As I write this review, I realize that Dee Dee Ramone's birthday was a couple days ago and this album serves as a fitting tribute. Every song starts with that iconic "1-2-3-4" scream and bass player Junkie Fever's sound is a driving inspiration to Dee Dee's spirit. This album kicks ass! —John Mule (Deadbeat, dead-beat-records.com)

MIND SPIDERS: *Inhumanistic: LP*

My puny earthling mind cannot begin to comprehend the sounds hitting my ear holes. It's like waves of science that were created specifically for my enjoyment. With each repeat listen I find myself falling deeper and deeper into the lair of the Mind Spiders. Leader Mark Ryan is an alien scientist, calmly asking questions, making observations, and doing research on the human condition. Every question

is asked for a reason, every emotion is clinically analyzed. Every story detailed. Musically, the band continues to build upon last year's *Meltdown*, taking some of the best aspects of some of my favorite bands such as Devo, Pixies, and (of course) Marked Men and distilling them into something that is, simply put, unearthly. This is easily in line for album of the year in my book. —Ty Stranglehold (Dirtnap)

MINDSET: *Now, More Than Ever: CD*

Straight edge hardcore in the East Coast vein. This CD collects an LP and two 7"s from this Baltimore, Maryland band. I'm sure those more familiar with the straight edge hardcore movement could pinpoint this sound a little better, but I hear elements of Gorilla Biscuits, 7 Seconds, and Dag Nasty, though the final product on the 2012 *Leave No Doubt* LP portion of this disc is much closer to the heavier, more metallic sounds of Sick Of It All and Cro-Mags. Right up my alley. Over the course of its ten songs and eighteen minutes, Mindset burns through well-written, well-executed and well-recorded hardcore, with intelligent and clearly heartfelt lyrics. Hardcore can sometimes lose me when it's screamed to such a degree that you need a lyric sheet to figure out what they're so goddamn angry about. Not the case here. Plenty of aggression and vitriol in the vocals, all with clear enunciation; what a concept! The next ten tracks come from 7"s released in 2008 and 2009. Same vein, but sounding

a little more like the latest wave of hardcore that I'm more familiar with like Government Warring and Wasted Time. Whether you're straight edge or not, this is some good fucking hardcore. I'll be searching out the *Leave No Doubt* vinyl release for sure. —Chad Williams (Refuse, refuserecords.prv.pl, refuserecords@gmail.com)

MOLE PEOPLE: *Red Reflector: 7"EP*

You can tell this magazine is run by a bunch of squares 'cos every time they get any drug music, they send it to me. Sure I love drugs, and I love some drug music, but don't send every record made by a bunch of longhaired twerps who have just discovered LSD. Impossible, weird, fuzzed-out, shape-shifting noise from Cleveland. I dunno—some of the weirder Hozac, navel gazing Pavement maybe? It's psychedelic in an indie rock way, all shimmer and fuzz. You know if you dig this. Get high. Grow your hair... fuck it. I think this shit's got no soul. I still love drugs. —Tim Brooks (Tolmie Terrapin, tolmierrapinpress.blogspot.com)

MOON BANDITS:

Action Changes Thinking: LP

Somewhere, out in the corporate music underworld, some poor bastard is going through piles of glossy photos and demos of the next big folk band slash teeny bopper poster boy. This, I am sad to report, is the state of Americana, or folk music, as it is represented in the popular media. Then, when you have given up on it altogether, the spirit of

angry but gentle leftist folk comes back with an album like *Action Changes Thinking* by Moon Bandits. I loved this record. The Los Angeles-based duo has created a collection of songs about longing after nature, living in the city, corporate misconduct, and personal responsibility. This album is, in the most wonderful way, apocalyptic. The end is here. A new beginning is upon us. When I listen, I think of the great quote from philosophical anarchist Leo Tolstoy: "In the name of God, stop a moment, cease your work, look around you." Beyond the great songs and lyrics, this album is beautifully packaged with original art, colored vinyl, and a zine that shares the song lyrics and personal reflections upon them by the band—Astrid and Tommy—and their friends. —John Mule (Self-released)

MUHAMMADALI:

Future Songs: Cassette

Wait, this is the same band that did a split with Unfun? Huh. To their credit, I cannot for the life of me pin this band's sound down with any precision. It's like a crazed melting pot of, I don't know, Matthew Sweet, Sundials, and some Goner band all mixed and smooched together. Part "alternative" rock, part sludgy post-rock, part garage punk. It's interesting, I suppose. But maybe it's the minimal packaging or the odd, noodling synthesizer scattered throughout. Maybe it's the irritating soundbites or just the feeling I got that the songs are really trying to go like hell to *go somewhere* but never quite

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manage to arrive at their destination. Whatever it is, I couldn't really get into *Future Songs*. The album just fell flat for me. One of those deals where I feel like, hell, all the pieces are there—I've practically got an obligation to like the album. But I just didn't. Sorry, fellows. —Keith Rosson (Dirt Cult)

NEGATIVE PRESS: *Long Haul*: LP

Chemically dependant and deep-rooted-issues dirge punk from Seattle, WA. Given the makeup of the band, which includes members of fellow local stalwarts such as Gag and Criminal Code, you'd think this record was a hands-down winner. Sadly, all I'm hearing is a less pleasurable stab at Pissed Jeans style despondence or the schizophrenic brilliance that is Slices' *Cruisin'* album. This record is like Little Caesars pizza: it's okay but that's kind of the problem. —Juan Espinosa (Inimical)

NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS:

No Sun No Tan: LP

Neighborhood Brats are one of the best punk bands in America right now. Jenny Angelillo's the star, the live focal point. Think: stilettos, the shoe kind. George Rager's (real last name) the bear with a buzzsaw guitar. Think: stilettos, the switch-bladed kind. It's like a ballet with violence. Think Runaways as a single woman. Tougher... tougher, still. Think bloody-nosed, tattooed beauty and Cleveland brawn backing. Think... aw, fuck it... thinking's overrated. Neighborhood Brats sound like smashing things and that makes

me extremely happy. Get on board. Or don't. I don't fucking care if you get it or not. Technical notes: longtime Brats fans, yes nine of these songs were previously on the one-side 12", the Falsified 7", and the *We Own the Night* 7". Is it worth the repurchase? Yes. Two unreleased tracks of Brats are better than ninety-eight percent of full-length records coming out in 2013. —Todd Taylor (Deranged)

NEW SWEARS: *Funny Isn't Real*: LP

Boy do I love it when an album's cover accurately describes the music inside. It's a collage of people in various states of partying. Beer, wounds, cross dressing, and an entire can of cranberry sauce being poured lovingly on a man's chest. The pictures are cutout and pasted together in a haphazard manner which screams loudly "We're not professionals! Try this at home!" Now imagine this aesthetic is applied to garage punk in the vein of acts like the Black Lips and Hunx And His Punx with the production values of a Dirtnap band. In short, fantastic. One of the best records of the year, no doubt. Put this sucker on and there's a party immediately. Like, it just forms around the record. Grade: A. —Bryan Static (Bachelor)

NO MISTAKE: *Connect the Dots...*

Complete the Puzzle: 7" EP

Ripping, nine-track NYHC-tinged hardcore EP, fronted by veteran Mike BS of SFA and Go! These dudes seem to be based in California, but you'd be easily fooled to think they're an East

Coast band. It's a thick, spirited, old school-sounding debut. Tough, yet not overly metallic. I'd compare them to a faster Murphy's Law, rather than, say, Agnostic Front. Mike's voice is almost comparable to Jimmy Gestapo at times, if we're going to talk about NYC. One of the better HC releases I've heard in a while. —Steve Adamyk (Guerilla Vinyl, limogespunx.com / Refuse, refuserecords.prv.pl / Suburban White Trash, suburbanwhitetrashrecords.com)

NO SIR I WON'T: *The Door*: LP

There's nothing like wearing your influences on your sleeve... or in your name. I guessed this was going to sound like Crass, and boy was I right. I mean that in the best possible, driving-anarcho punk way, not the annoying squawking lady or the shit hippy overtones. To be honest, while the Crass label is an easy one, I think they have more in common with Conflict who carried a similar message with a more straight ahead musical style. This is powerful anarcho punk with a message that I wholeheartedly subscribed to as a youth. I signed up to the anarcho punk dogma as a teen in the '80s and, to be honest, much of the overly simplistic, trite lyrics about the threat of war, the system being shit, and animals being good really shaped what I have become. This is Dan from Surrender's new band, which makes total sense, as this is a harder and faster continuation of that band. Can't say I wholly subscribe to the anarcho dogma anymore, but I can dig it. —Tim Brooks (Framework, frameworklabel.com)

NO//SÉ: *"Beach Bathroom Bingo"* b/w *"All The Little Things You Love to Hate": 7"*

It took less than ten seconds for "Beach Bathroom Bingo" to seduce me to the point that I was ready to go down on my knees and beg for more. The 2012 debut album by NO//sé (ex-Glass & Ashes, Young Livers) was very good, but a slight change in the recording / production on this single has resulted in the band sounding even better—none of the oomph has been lost but everything just seems more together without any frayed edges. These guys are setting the standard for quality melodic punk rock with a no-nonsense, rock'n'roll-influenced approach that delivers on all levels. Even the extra track which comes via the download code isn't too shabby either. Easily one of the best singles of 2013. For those seeking this out, and you should be doing so, 1859 is in the U.S. and Different Kitchen is in the U.K. —Rich Cocksedge (1859, 1859records.storenvy.com / Different Kitchen, differentkitchen.bigcartel.com)

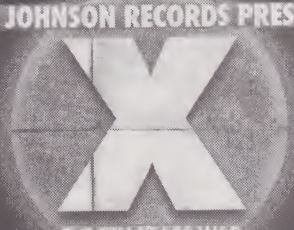
NOCIVOS: *Tiempo de Desastre*: CD

Mid-tempo-to-gallop-speed Spanish punk rock. The recording's clean, the performance spirited, the songs are catchy, and they definitely know how to wield a sing-along chorus. —Jimmy Alvarado (Nocivos, facebook.com/nocivos)

ONIONS, THE: *Self-titled*: LP


These guys have been around for a while, pounding out their take on the

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beer-swilling, KBD-inspired garage punk'n'roll. If that's your thing, this fourteen-song LP will not disappoint. Of the songs on here, two feature vocals by fellow Wisconsinite Rev. Nørb of Boris The Sprinkler. This is totally solid, no-frills Midwestern punk rock, completely and totally DIY, and limited to three hundred copies. —Mark Twistworthy (Brad X, bradxtapesondemand.webs.com)

ORIGIN OF M: *Struggle*: LP

I was hooked on this from the opening riffs of the title track. Origin Of M's distinct sound is a collision of the raw intensity of hardcore punk meeting the swagger of rock'n'roll. Featuring Mr. Guy, formerly of Gudon, on vocals and Maru, of Asphalt, on guitar, Origin Of M take catchy riffs, incorporate blazing solos into them, and add Mr. Guy's howling voice to create a ten-track LP that you don't just listen to, you experience it. The mixed Japanese/English lyrics have a decidedly political bent, and complement the music well. There are plenty of sing-along parts, and some heavy mosh parts that make you want to get low and dance, especially on the song "Suck Up!!" which was one of my favorites on this. I'm totally stoked on this record. —Paul J. Comeau (StraightUp, reallife@straightup-rec.com)

PAMPERS: *Self-titled*: LP

Pampers is a cool record that doesn't fit easy categorization—hard-charging punk rock bordering on hardcore.

Pampers also incorporate a mid-'80s Casio sampler and guitar effects. Lyrics are largely indistinguishable and the music gets sludgy at times. Fans of Ryan Rousseau's various projects (Tokyo Electron and Destruction Unit) will likely be into *Pampers*. *Pampers* is a solid debut worth picking up. Band is from Brooklyn. —Ryan Leach (In The Red)

PENETRATORS:

Kings of Basement Rock: LP

The second reissue for this early garage punk gem here, originally released in the '80s by Fred Records and reissued prior by Rave Up around the turn of the millennium. What you're getting with your buy-in are twelve tunes steeped in '60s beat rock recorded 1976-84. The sound is quite clean, and this version has apparently been remastered from an original pressing of the album, so it sounds even more like they're playing in your garage. —Jimmy Alvarado (Slovenly)

PERKELE: *A Way Out*: CD

This oi band from Sweden has been around since 1992 and has been consistently releasing quality music. This is another home run from them. These ten new songs of old school oi anthems that have a touch of Sham 69 mixed in are a powerful stampede of bootboy anger and passion that will have you singing along with them. This band has gone out of their way to create an album of hooks and tight playing with gruff vocals that give the songs a hard edge. It stands out from the generic stuff that passes off as punk rock

a lot of the time, like the horrible Blink 182. These guys sound nothing like them and don't pander to the masses to dilute the aggression and pure power of these intense oi songs. The songs are played with such feeling and commitment that you can hear the love and emotion that the band has put into this new album, so much so that it fills you with a sense of energy and excitement that makes you want to shout about them to all of your friends. If you don't own any of their albums, go out and start with this one; if you're already a fan, you need this one! —Rick Ecker (Spirit Of The Streets, oi-punk.com)

PIG WELT: *Root Porno*: Cassette

One of the best listening experiences I've had in a long time was over the summer, driving with Zach Rooney to our friends' house while he played rough demos of his new Pig Welt songs. It was a warm day and breezy, and here was Zach playing genius home-recorded desert rock by way of Unwound and Slint through his iPhone (might have been an iPod). I think I briefly understood the universe, no joke. On *Root Porno*, he finds the common ground between *Up on the Sun* and David Grubbs, between a cluttered attic bedroom and the expanse of the Mojave and the cool, damp woods of the Northwest. It's effortless, catchy head-space rock with bonus droning, for people who want to drive/float/smoke on a long, slow day. Get this immediately. —Matt Werts (Holy Page, holypage.org)

POISON IDEA: *Kings of Punk*: 2 x LP

What else can be said but "essential"? Poison Idea is an anomaly in the pantheon of American hardcore. They withstand the test of time. This beautifully reissued record is a testament to that. You should already know that the tunes here are amazing. The second record features live stuff from 1984-1986 that brings all the fury that is PI. I could only imagine what it was like to see them back then, and now I don't have to wonder. There is also a poster, photos, artwork and Jerry A. telling the story of shooting the grotesque album cover. Keep the reissues coming TKO! —Ty Stranglehold (TKO)

POISON PLANET / GOVERNMENT FLU: *Government Poison*: "I"

I have never heard of Government Flu, and that is a problem. This band completely shreds Agnostic Front-style hardcore with that mid-2000s chug vibe but they fucking *kill* it in a way I haven't heard in a long time. Fans of the now-defunct Malfunction Records catalog (early Ceremony, Allegiance, Internal Affairs) should go nuts over this. Their side of the record is excellent and the vocals and lyrics are fantastic (especially considering this band is Polish and I believe English is their second language). The Poison Planet side was recorded, I guess, right around their breakup and really show a band pulling something off with a total sense of urgency. Right from the Black Flag rip-off intro the band feels rushed and chaotic, like they only had



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half an idea of what they were really doing. That being said, I will say one hundred percent without a doubt that this is the best thing Poison Planet has ever released. The lineup on the release (members of Raw Nerve and RazorXFade) probably had more influence than they thought; because the raw sensibilities of those bands translate in a way that Poison Planet didn't before. —Ian Wise (Refuse, refuserecords.prv.pl)

POOR LILY: *Vuxola*: CD

Weird and dynamic enough to appeal to folks interested in genres beside punk. How's that? Confident, strange, and buoyant songs that are so precise they might as well be laser-guided. Similar in oddity and tone as NoMeansNo and Alice Donut or even more challenging shit like Ruins. Nineteen songs kind of pushes the limits of my endurance, but they're undoubtedly good at what they're doing. —Keith Rosson (Poor Lily)

PROLETAR / ANALDICKTION: *Split*: 7"

Tonally, Proletar and Analdicktion are a worthy pairing. Jakarta-based Proletar has been together since 1999, and they have been featured on more than twenty releases since that time. The band recalls a high-octane reinterpretation of Napalm Death, if the lyrics were addressing imperialism, outsourcing, and politics of the left; pretty cool topic matter to hear from voices outside of the U.S. Take that intellectual activity with the blizzard of serrated chords and

Proletar's three tracks and make for a fine A-side. On the B-side is Analdicktion, a recently defunct group from Singapore, who are a bit more of an anomaly for me. I'm intrigued by the brutality of the vocals that are so engagingly awry with effects they seem to boil up from the bottom of a swamp (or fly in from outer space on radio waves made of crude oil) but songs like "Fuck Artsy Indie Girl Bullshit" and "Trendy Hipster Castration Bloodbath" seem a bit like caricatures. But the goregrind vocals are so pleasingly spooky that I eagerly sleuthed around for more material. Analdicktion's 2011 album, *Sluts*, is well-reviewed, but similarly hard to get down with due to song titles like "Semen Covered Butchered Whores" and "Severed Scene Slut" and from the abundance of rape jokes in a few reviews I checked out in my hunt for more material. I get that the gore misogyny is probably intended to be more goofball than machismo, but the outcome is normalization of creepy misogynistic thinking. Call me Tipper Gore, but it reminds me in part of why even at punk and hardcore shows in 2013, many of my female friends can't pass a night without being groped or harassed by dudes in the scene, and how DIY, even though it's implicitly left leaning, can still feel like an angry hetero boy's club. In sum, this is an EP of rad grindcore sounds but ultimately mixed messages. —Jim Joyce (Suburban White Trash)

PROLETARIAT PUNCH: *Signs of Civilization*: CD

From what I can gather, this is a discography of sorts covering a couple of tape releases, a single, and some other tracks the band's released over the past few years, packed inexplicably in a Harum Scarum CD cover, which is in turn glued to the inside of a lyric booklet. The tunes are overwhelmingly of the thrashy variety that often sounds like a history lesson in U.K. anarcho punk, with moments where they slow the manic tempos down a bit and occasionally drop in some Subhumans-derived reggae. Was a bit skeptical of 'em at the outset because of the obviousness of their influences, but they definitely won me over by doing things well and with sincerity. —Jimmy Alvarado (Recluse)

PSYCHOTIC TURNBUCKLES:

Destroy Dull City: 2 x CD

A double-dose of historical noisemonstering from this legendary Australian (via Pismo Beach) garage punk unit. Included are the *Destroy Dull City* EP, the *Beyond the Flipout* LP and assorted rarities on the first disc, and a complete collection of single A and B-sides, plus some more rarities on disc two, making for about as fine an introduction to the band as you're probably ever gonna get. Throw in some extensive liner notes and track commentary and you have yourself a party, kiddo. As can be expected, shit's loud, primal, fuzzy as hell, and wholly worth the trip. —Jimmy Alvarado (Citadel)

RADIATOR HOSPITAL: *Something Wild*: LP

Bedroom projects often need trimming. I like to think I understand an individual's "need" to get their music out, but, for me, most bedroom recordings don't hold up to repeated listening. That being said, bedroom projects that get re-imagined with a full band (especially with members of Swearin', Very Okay, and The Fucking Cops) have a lot of potential. The full band songs rollick and swagger along while Sam's voice weaves in with a lazy college rock drawl (a la Cheap Girls). However, the backing/layered vocals are unnecessary, a bit annoying, and detract from Sam's voice during the full band tracks. The bedroom type solo tracks... maybe younguns will connect with the love angst. Me, I wish the full band songs were divided up to their own side of the LP. Then I wouldn't have to turn the LP over. Ever. Wheat from the chaff, y'all. —Matt Seward (Salinas)

RANDOM CONFLICT:

Tradition Is the Enemy: LP

Another full-length from this long in the tooth Southern hardcore band. The delivery's a bit more feisty than on previous albums, but in the end, nothing really stands out or sets them apart from the pack. Really wanted to like this more than I actually do. —Jimmy Alvarado (No Profit, noprofitrecords.limitedrun.com)

RAW NERVES: *Futile Efforts*: LP

Goddamn is this some crushing hardcore! Portland's Raw Nerves serve

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up a full length's worth of mid-paced, gruff hardcore hoisting the same flag as favorites like Rorschach and Strung Up. The speed barriers are hardly broken here but that's exactly what is going perfectly well in the songwriting process with the focus being on brutally heavy riffs and pounding drums. Truth time: I've heard of Raw Nerves prior to getting this handed to me, but ignored them due to the fact that I was more into Raw Nerve from Chicago whose popularity exploded when Youth Attack put out their records. Not to take anything away from Raw Nerve, whom I do like a lot, but now that they've called it quits I don't see why the spotlight shouldn't primarily be on Raw Nerves from here on out. If a prolonged hardcore beat down is what you seek then your search is over. —Juan Espinosa (Man In Decline)

RED DONS, THE:

Notes on the Underground: 7"

It's quite simple really, this is an outstanding record. To be honest, that should be enough to make people flock to buy it but just in case you need a bit more encouragement, try to imagine taking the best bits of Occult Detective Club and The Steve Adamyk Band, throwing them into a blender, switching it on for ten seconds, and then adding a touch of The Marked Men to the resulting mixture: The Red Dons would be what you end up with. "Cold Hearted" is an absolute gem of a track with an intro that extends over ninety seconds before any vocals join

in. This record also has a wonderfully warm and full sound that further enhances the aural experience. —Rich Cocksedge (Grave Mistake)

REGREŚ: Nie Patrzec Wstęgi: LP

This is a post-hardcore album from Warsaw, Poland. There is a lot of noise here. For the third time in this review cycle, I wish I could fucking understand Polish. I appreciate the experimentation here. The drummer is not giving any hints away. Like the guitar riffs, his beats don't get into a rhythm long enough for you to get stuck in them and miss the guttural vocals. I admit, this music is not my cup of tea (or whatever they drink in Poland), but I was impressed with the territory Regreś is charting here. —John Mule (Refuse, refuserecords.prv.pl)

REV NØRB AND THE ONIONS:

EP 707077: 7"

Yep, you pantsed me. Nørø writes a column and reviews for Razorcake. I sorta wish the nepotism didn't stop there. His memory's phenomenal when it comes to comparisons, so I feel like a bit of schmub trying to write this review. He'd probably do a better job of it than I. Here are the low-hanging fruit pies for reference: Mummies, New Bomb Turks, and Devil Dogs. Taco Bell Budget Rock. Before Nørø joined, Manitowoc's Onions (some former Last Sons Of Krypton fellas), pervaded a "why not shorts when we're playing?" / gas attendant / let's stand mostly still, it worked for CH3 aesthetic. I'd say that

Nørø has appropriately Sweet-Tarted up the proceedings, both live and on record. Flam-boy-ance. DIY punk's Nordstrom's Rack Liberace? (Green Bay and West Allis are only about a hundred and twenty miles from one another. Coincidence?) Boris The Sprinkler fans won't be disappointed. Bob Dylan fans probably would be (this isn't a reprise of Nørø Dylan And His Nørsoletes). My sole gripe is that someone who's as graphic design-ly on top of his shit would allow such egregious pixilation on the labels... well, I never. It's a record in a dust sleeve. I didn't get a cover. I like this record. Only time will tell if it's the Studebaker of penises. —Todd Taylor (Brad X Tapes, braddaugs@yahoo.com.)

RIFLE DIET: "Abuse Begets Abuse"

b/w "The Affected": 7"

Nice to see Profane Existence is still limping along, although I think printing "limited edition" across the sleeve is lame. In this day and age, every indie press is "limited," unless there's like five of them. Whatever. This is an absolute skull crusher of a disc. Minneapolis crusties who have done time in more than enough bands to give them credibility, hammering through two tunes of dirty, downtuned, crusty mayhem. I'm thinking From Ashes Rise or Wolfbrigade, but some of the harshest female vocals this side of Mandy from Health Hazard. People say this genre is played out. I say fuck 'em. —Tim Brooks (Profane Existence, profaneexistence.com)

RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS: Self-titled: LP

Here it is for the first time on vinyl, a little over a decade after the Gamblers' first CD was released. Nope, rocker, *Something to Crow About* was not their debut. Fleshes are AC/DC for the weird. Arrivals are the Grand Funk Railroad of punk. (How great would an Arrivals double LP gatefold be, am I right?) The Gamblers are harder to pin down. They're in this hard rock / punk rock paradox, both a dark matter wormhole and an exploding cosmos of high kicks and spider monkey sweat. If you don't listen to a single word, don't digest a single sentiment—just have "rookie sensation" Mike Wiebe's voice become an adult Peanuts' wah-wah-wah sound—the high-kneed stomp and gang hand claps conjure up Angus Young, etch S-T-R-U-T right into your brain. The music's in league with Lee Harvey Oswald Band's *Blastronaut* and Turbonegro's *Apocalypse Dudes*. Sweating diamonds. Knifeey, greasy, let's have sex music. But the thing is—sue me—I'm a reader. Books and shit. Words mean something to me. And for all the "presto, underpants gone" sound of the Gamblers, there's this dark undercurrent to the lyrics. Self-effacement, self-doubt, anxiety, and insecurity run rampant through the Gamblers as they shoot confetti to the rafters and burn this stupid place to the ground. And it's this paradox, that steam piston of rock'n'roll abandon and "I'm fucked. Nobody likes me, myself mostly" Charlie Brownism that keeps me an unabashed Gamblers

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fan to this day, five albums and the *Backsides* collection down the road. The Gamblers: Rock'n'roll made in a garage, built for future stadiums. Produced by Tim Kerr. Includes a Ramones cover. Let's go! -Todd Taylor (Recorded Messages, recorded-messages.com)

RONIN: *The Sun Also Sets: 7"*

Very snotty and dark, this nifty three-song record features a vocalist that is eerily similar to Jesse Rich, the singer of Broken Bottles that passed away in 2010. It's a solid 7" for sure, with each of the three songs sounding like highlight tracks from full length releases. "The Sun Also Sets" is the best of the songs, with its dark twist title capturing the unhappy tone nicely. Hopefully the sun won't set on this band any time soon! -Art Ettinger (Robotnicka, robotnickarecords@hotmail.com)

RULETA RUSA: *Aqui No Es: LP*

The cover depicts a cartoon image of a steam train hurtling along, surrounded by bats and a Misfits-like skeleton, looking very much like the Grim Reaper. The train is especially apt to Ruleta Rusa's music, as it rips along at a fair pace most of the time with apparent disregard for all and sundry. It's a great mix of punk, hardcore, garage, and rock'n'roll with former Peligro Social vocalist Jose Decay turning in a fine performance. With the lyrics being in Spanish, I'm at a loss as to their content, but this doesn't diminish my enjoyment. The title track

provides a slight variation in delivery, coming across like a cross between Rough Kids—another Sorry State band—and Anhrefn, an old Welsh (and predominantly Welsh language) punk band. The record closes in fine fashion with "Curriqui de Barrio" containing some outstanding guitar work which elevates the song to the top of the pile. -Rich Cocksedge (Sorry State, daniel@sorrystaterecords.com, sorrystaterecords.com)

SARABANTE:

Epmaia Ton Kaidon: 7" single

Heavy on the Tragedy /From Ashes Rise influences here, so much so that there's no room left for the band to allow their own personalities to come through. Granted, they do the style well, like the opening to "Under the Shadows," with the exploding drum beat and everything coming in right behind. But, I've heard Tragedy and From Ashes Rise do these very same things for years now. Those two bands do it well and just about everyone else who plays this style just seems to follow along and not offer much else. I've grown way tired of hearing this stuff the past few years. -M.Avr (Man In Decline, manindeclinerecords.com)

SEASONAL MEN'S WEAR / WILLIAM WESLEY & THE TINY SOCKETS: *Split: CD*

Wow, this is a strange release. How did these bands get together? Seasonal Men's Wear play vaguely comedic pop punk that sometimes ventures into a

kind of light youth crew hardcore. I guess this is Propagandhi-esque? Maybe low-stakes Propagandhi. The music is fine, or serviceable. The problem is the lyrics are just piles of bad jokes. Just confusing in-jokes and flat attempts at satire, if you can call it that. It was a struggle making it past the "pizza pants" song (I think it's track three), or figuring out what "pizza pants" means, or understanding what they're getting at in any of their songs, really. I look forward to these guys growing out of this phase. But then there's William Wesley & The Tiny Sockets. William Wesley is a guy named Wess Hess doing oddball lo-fi bedroom pop with a broken Tascam and a microcassette recorder, a 4-string guitar, and a Casio and other things. His best songs are the ones that maybe barely qualify as songs, the ones that feel spliced together, that kind of drone on and seem like field recordings. I'm thinking of "We Lead a Miserable Life," which starts with a chopped and screwed loop of someone saying "we lead a miserable life" over a basic beat and a wash of guitar noise, then fades to guitar strumming, like fake Jim Croce, the whole thing lasting just over a minute. Or "Party Line Jamming in the 21st Century #37," a collection of actual phone line recordings (?) and bleeps and tones and noises. It's almost like Gray, Jean-Michel Basquiat's band. Though he has what could loosely be considered traditional songs, there's also an anti-music quality, a willingness to construct and deconstruct at any

moment. Hess has a perspective that seems distinctly his. His voice is not the greatest, there's a deep gremlin-ish feel to it, but I'm not going to correct him. Whatever he wants to do is fine with me. -Matt Werts (Brown Bear)

SEMPER EADEM: *Demo: Cassette*

New band from the frontman of 86 Mentality, and what you get here are four songs that sound like what that band would be doing if they had stayed together. It's a tad more melodic than his previous efforts, but still fucking tough and aggressive—super catchy riffs and lyrics about being a pissed-off adult holding onto the last shreds of youth. I'm told this is just a "project band" for right now, but that may change. I hope so, because this band could do something really great. -Ian Wise (Nobody Cult, nobodycult.bigcartel.com)

SETE STAR SEPT: *Visceral Tavern: LP*

2013 has been quite a busy year for Japanese noise/grind duo Sete Star Sept with *Visceral Tavern* being one of over a dozen releases spread over several different labels and formats. Although I only have one other record of theirs (the 10" split with Noise) to go by, it sounds like these songs are much more structured—as opposed to whirlwinds of noise—though still ripe with wild bursts of noise and vocalist Kae's patented grunting/screaming one-two punch. I'm going to stand by my assessment of an early Anal Cunt influence but follow

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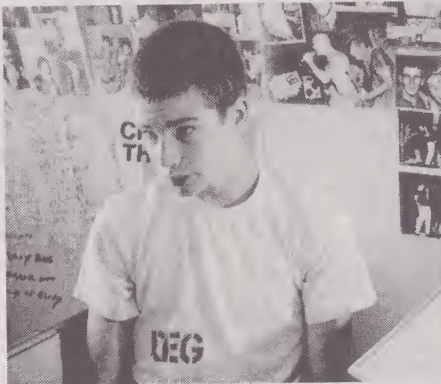


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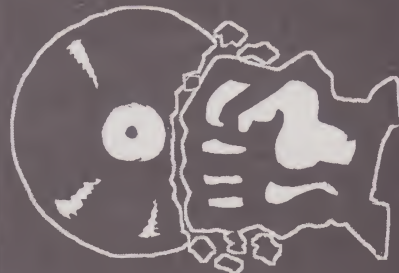
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it up with the hypothesis that they're also quite fond of fellow countryman the Gerogerigegege's work. For the unsuspecting, that means this shit is devoid of melody, groove, or any sort of tempo of which you can keep something as constricting as a time signature. To really drive the point across, side two is one long track of free-form blast beats and deep-fryer immersed bass guitar burl with Kae laughing all the while. The cover art depicting a macabre scene of numerous zombies feasting on an entrails-and-limbs buffet of dead young women is further warning: you'd do best to stay away from this record if you expect to see or hear anything pleasant. —Juan Espinosa (SPHC, 7s7.org)

SHARK TOYS: Self-titled: LP

Repetitive, clean guitar riff telegraph a Wire quality in this record. There is a lot of fast riffage over primal drumming with dry, blasé vocals in the best way. "Pot Holes" could be a post-punk classic. "Who Cares?" expresses well the reckless abandon of youth. It's instantly catchy. The whole thing's like that. If you're into that sort of thing, it's a home run. Nice one. —Billups Allen (Dead Beat)

SHOCKED MINDS: Self-titled: CD

Another winner from HoZac here. Former members of the Carbonas, Gentleman Jesse & His Men, Beat Beat Beat, and Games get together to deliver a full-length bounty of neo/retro-punk tunes along the same lines as Sonic

Avenues, Rough Kids, Busy Signals, and so on. Tunes have a bevy of hooks and a dark undertow to the lion's share of the proceedings. This ain't gonna make it through the week before it gets worn down to the nubs. —Jimmy Alvarado (HoZac, hozarecords.com)

SICK/TIRED: Lowlife: Cassette

Members of MK-Ultra and Weekend Nachos making sick and heavy grind. I don't really know what else to even say about this tape. This is top-notch grind with obligatory dual vocals and tight songs that meld into a face-melting landscape of fucking evil and despair. This tape consists of re-recordings of older songs from previous releases but the recording is excellent and the way the songs flow together make this its own release instead of just a collection of old songs. Get this right now. —Ian Wise (Six Weeks, sixweeksrecords@comcast.com)

SLENDER LORIS: World Tour: Cassette

Let me start by saying how refreshing it is to receive new material on cassette. Back in the day, trading tapes was a great way to hear your next favorite band. That being said, my cassette player broke years ago so I had to visit the Slender Loris site for this review. I paraded through their new seventeen-song effort multiple times before I felt comfortable enough to write this review because I wanted to make sure I heard all the different nuances and crunchy riffs these guys had to offer. I heard everything from

hardcore to sludge to noisy garage rock. The back and forth vocals between the guitar and bass player are neatly placed on top of the bass-heavy instrumentation. If you're looking for bubble gum pop punk complete with sing-along choruses, this release is not for you. These guys put out a lot of power for a three piece outfit. Dare I describe these Canada-based punks as a dirty, sloppy sounding Nomeansno? Go get this record and decide for yourself. —Brent Nimz (Self-released, slenderlorismusic@gmail.com)

SLOW WARM DEATH: Self-titled: LP

Slow Warm Death singer John Galm has a shaky voice that seems to have something to say. These guys play loud, fuzzed-out, garage, static-rock. There's just enough clarity to make it listenable on more than one occasion. And just when I think these guys are lo-fi, they bust out a track like, "Blood 2" which has very honest lyrics and a '90s indie rock sound reminiscent of Sebadoh. Considering I had never heard these guys before (they're from Lehigh Valley, PA and I'm from California), I can honestly say I'm impressed. Hopefully they're committed enough to tour because these songs sound like they would be even better live. If you like fuzzy, indie rock—border lining on rock'n'roll music—these guys will fulfill your needs. Plan on at least checking out this record at your local record store, if not to buy it then to look at the artwork. The cover has a photograph of a Jesus and Mary

Magdalene statue that is propped up by a crushed beer can. It makes it look as though Mary is dipping Jesus, like in classical dancing. —Ryan Nichols (Square Of Opposition)

SMART BOYS: "RSVP"

b/w "Cutting through Life": 7"

I love the mod bands: The Who, The Jam, The Buzzcocks. If you do too, you should check into Smart Boys. This single took me back to some of those bands and their sound: big drums, power chords, and vocals with a shark's bite. "RSVP" is a great tune, but I really liked the b-side, "Cutting through Life." —John Mule (Deranged, derangedrecords.com, derangedyouth@hotmail.com)


SNEEZE: I'm Going to Kill Myself: LP

Power chords rarely sound this powerful. The opening track will induce a full-body implosion that melts your brain into your lungs. You'll find yourself coughing viscusly while tapping your toes and nodding your empty head. Aurally, it's at once derivative of grunge and garage, but simultaneously exciting and well-executed. Somehow, Sneeze is able to retread and deviate in equal measures. The lyrics are undeniably bleak (no surprise given the title), but it's all so damn catchy that you'll find yourself singing, "I head straight for the liquor cabinet so don't blink. I'm not afraid to shoot." Definitely the soundtrack to a bad day. Sure, it won't cheer you up, but it'll be comforting to know that some people are worse off—and, hell,

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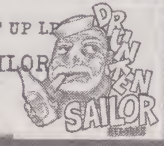
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you won't have much a brain left to care with anyway. —Sean Arenas (Close To Home, closetohome@live.co.uk, closetohomerecords.com / Midnight Werewolf, midnightwerewolfrecords@gmail.com, midnightwerewolf.wordpress.com)

SONNY VINCENT: *Totally Fucked: 7"*
Smokin' slab of rock efficiency. In two terrifically thick, big-hole sides, Sonny Vincent crams in three energetic garage gems. By "garage," in this instance, I'm talking about a bunch of dudes bashing out hooky, fast songs with rudiments and an absence of bells and whistles, and none of the willfully lo-fi recording that follows the genre around—everything is audible and well-recorded in the mix. "Robot Radio" cribs hardcore's oompurgency, and "Come for You" is the most melodic of the batch by dint of soaring choral vocals. Wouldn't be out of place on a Humpers/Stooes bill. —Michael T. Fournier (Oops Baby)

STABLER: *Squadroom: Cassette*
Stabler's ten-track *Squadroom* is an eight minute, ten second pal. To me, Stabler's *Squadroom* recalls Black Flag's loose rush of power, akin to *Damaged*, minus Greg Ginn's jazzpunk solos but very much with the rush and crash of a band that only pauses for the bass to dig out a jagged groove or to allow silence until the next track. To compare with something more recent? Maybe Chicago's Weekend Nachos. Stabler songs like "Torture" and "Self-Disgust" offer uplifting lyrics, encouraging the

listener to challenge mediocre shit—to be humbled, to be aware, and to take responsibility for life choices. So the content is there for lyric lovers like me. Sonically, the rapid swipe and chug of these tracks is ideal for smashing chairs to, or for powering through rough spots that Minor Threat tracks like "Seeing Red" and "Filler" just can't clean. You can grab *Squadroom* off of Stabler's Bandcamp (check out the vaguely titled "...preview..." song there, too) or procure a cassette from their label, Reality Is A Cult. —Jim Joyce (Reality Is A Cult, realityisacult.blogspot.com / stabler.bandcamp.com)

SUNDIALS: *Always Whatever: LP*
Subtitled, "A Collection of Songs from 2009-2012," this record traces Sundials' evolution from scrappy punk band with a taste for Archers Of Loaf to Weezer-y emo for people who never felt guilty for liking Alkaline Trio (the cover even references Alkaline Trio's self-titled singles collection). Sundials are a damn good band, and I'm pleased to have this to fill in the gaps in my collection. —Chris Terry (Asian Man)

SUNDOWNER: *Neon Fiction: CD*
Sundowner is a project of Chris McCaughan of The Lawrence Arms. It's an acoustic-based singer/songwriter project that he started working on in early 2006. This is his third album. He is joined on this album by Neil Hennessy on bass guitar and drums. Together they have managed to make an acoustic album that will appeal to people

not looking for a Springsteen clone, but for a band that gives the listener something substantial to listen to—no slogans, just pure musical enjoyment. These ten songs are a nice mixture of faster songs—"Cemetery West," "We Drift Eternal"—and slower, more melancholic songs, like "My Beautiful Ruins" and "Grey on Grey." The mix of the songs works really well to keep a flow going. It never drags or gets too maudlin. —Rick Ecker (Fat)

SURPRISE VACATION: *Self-titled: 7"*
The cover for this record is a total throwback to day-glow side of the eighties. Which could be part of why I'm reminded of bands like the Simpletones and the Crowd when I listen to this record. Edward Colver took the photos for this release, which makes sense. Surprise Vacation has a poppy beach punk sound. Song titles like "Drive" and "Head Over Heels" let you know that these boys are in it for fun. This is a feel good, summer, punk rock single, complete with handclaps and "whoa's." —Ryan Nichols (Bad Touch)

TANGLED LINES, THE: *Discography Tape: Cassette*
It was a major disappointment when I heard Tangled Lines had called it quits. This cassette preserves every blazing riff—their full length, 7"s, including the *Wash the Shit Off 7"*, which was my favorite of their releases, their split with 4Sivits, plus demos, live tracks, and more. I saw the Tangled Lines when they toured the U.S., and was immediately

hooked on their thunderous sound and their positive message. Vocalist Luise had one of the most distinct voices in hardcore, a combination of bubblegum cuteness and banshee howl screams, which, when coupled with shredding riffs, gave Tangled Lines a raw power to which few other bands could compare. Every ounce of intensity packed into this cassette makes it a must listen. —Paul J. Comeau (Spastic Fantastic, spasticfantastic.de)

TANGLED LINES, THE: *Stacy: 12" LP*
Not at all what I expected. The cover art totally threw me off. It's a shattered image of a Barbie-faced mutant, glossy and pink with stars and sparkly font. I am not fluent in Polish (Tangled Lines is from Poland), but there apparently is a story behind this mutant Barbie named Stacy and her escapades through consumerist hell; song titles include "Botox Smile" and "Reinvention." What I do know is that this LP at times totally rages with hardcore/thrash female-fronted vocals (reminiscent to Foreign Objects), as well as erodes and digresses into a strange swamp of rock breakdowns that go nowhere for no good reason. Overall, though, it's pretty good. Apparently, Tangled Lines is no longer. They broke up in 2012, and this is their final album. —Camylle Reynolds (Refuse, refuserecords.prv.pl)

TECHNICOLOR TEETH: *Sage: 7" EP*
Woozy, dreamy pop stuff with lots of reverb and such. They dirty up the sound plenty, but counterbalance it with tasty

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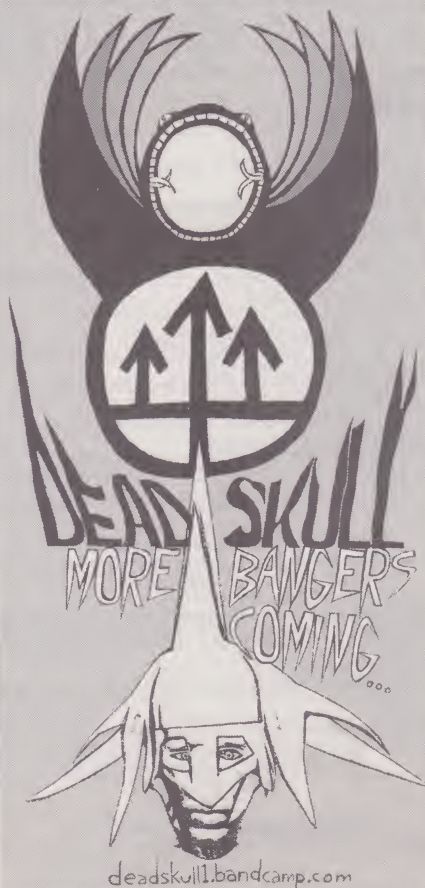
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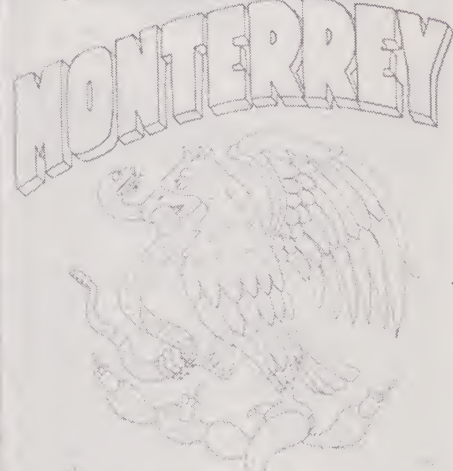
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hooks and engaging arrangements. I'm diggin' it more with each listen. —Jimmy Alvarado (Cowabunga)

TEN VOLT SHOCK: 78 Hours: CD

(This was released in 2010, and there's no sign of it being a reissue on my copy here, so I'm not sure why I got it with my review package—especially since they recently released a new record—but whatever). Ten Volt Shock are a relatively long-running German band who clearly are no strangers to the “angular,” noisy sounds of Shotmaker, Big Black, Hoover, and Hot Snakes. This kinda thing is certainly having something of a resurgence right now (ahem... METZ) and Ten Volt Shock does it as well as anyone else. I've personally always felt that this sub-genre was right in that awkward place on the spectrum between heavy enough and hooky enough (and therefore sorta lacking in both respects) but people sure seem to go wild for it. —Dave Williams (Bakery Outlet, bakeryoutletrecords.com / Salon Alter Hammer / Screaming Mimi / X-Mist)

THIRTY SIX STRATEGIES:

Strategy One: CD

The *Thirty Six Strategies* (or “stratagems,” depending on the source you're looking at) is a collection of Chinese sayings akin to Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, in that it offers effective tactics in matters of war, politics, diplomacy, and so on. Strategy One, according to translator Stefan H. Verstappen, translates as “Fool the

Emperor to Cross the Sea” in his book, *The Thirty Six Strategies of Ancient China*. The idea behind this strategy, he explains, is that in order “to lower an enemy's guard you must act in the open hiding your true intentions under the guise of common every day activities.” With that in mind, *Thirty Six Strategies*—the band—play impressive poppy punk with ringing Hüskers-via-Leatherface guitars and flat-but-fitting vocals belting out lyrics addressing mostly personal issues with a vagueness that'll surely help to avoid any potential controversies. Whether or not they're adhering to the precepts of the aforementioned Strategy One is dependent on their ultimate, if any, ulterior motives—are they looking to capitalize on any subsequent popularity they garner within the punk scene to vault them into mainstream success? Is their end-game to subvert and bring down the whole of punkdom via ambiguous lyrics and catchy hooks? Are they just another band who picked a random name they thought clever, only to have some asshole reviewer pick it apart and find nefariousness in efforts wholly innocuous?—and only the band knows the truth at this point. I for one intend to remain ever-vigilant. —Jimmy Alvarado (Boss Tuneage)

TONGUE: Body + Mind: 7"

Visceral and atonal without any pretentiousness, Oakland's TONGUE (pronounced No Tongue) play evolved screamo without warranting any guffaw. Like Fugazi or A Day In Black And

White, the hits are hard and frantic yet remain harnessed. This isn't sloppiness in the guise of competence, but, instead, proficiency that ranges from brooding duress to dreamy, nearly pop-like melodies. The songs never become awash or redundant; they are concise and memorable with vocals that feature gentle falsettos and guttural strains. (There are even some languid “oooh”s snuck in there.) There's a lot of variety on this four song 7". Also includes a zine with a wax poetic manifesto entitled “Destroy Hardcore”—I couldn't agree more. —Sean Arenas (Kyeo Speaks, kyeospeaks.com)

TRASHMONSTERS: There's a Rat in the Tunnel of Love: CD

Cali-style melodic punk with a natural touch of rock'n'roll and some welcome humor in the lyrics (“I Was a Teenage Pessimist”). If I had this in high school, it would have been in the car stereo post-getting dumped, on the way to a diner with my buddies to make inside jokes until the waitress stopped refilling our coffees. —Chris Terry (Heap O' Trouble)

TWITCHING TONGUES:

In Love There Is No Law: LP

Here I sit, thirty-two years young, and finally, a band has gone and done it. Los Angeles's Twitching Tongues has boiled down seemingly every brilliant, heavy influence from my youth—Type O Negative, Pantera/Down, Only Living Witness, Crowbar, Life Of Agony, Cro-Mags, Machine Head, Sheer Terror—into one incredibly sincere, pained,

and immeasurably weighty full-length record. Understandably, Twitching Tongues is positioned within the current hardcore crop—members claim(ed) spots in Nails, Disgrace, Creatures, Ruckus, and other notables—but the depth of this band goes well beyond the hardcore formula. Musically, there's a maturity here rarely seen in hardcore circles. The consistent, seamless shifts in tempo and dynamics are masterful (conjuring *River Runs Red* or *Bloody Kisses*) and the playing itself is dead-on. That said, the highlight here is vocalist Colin Young. Young's softer sections offer a genuine sadness similar to Mina (née Keith) Caputo or “Hollow”-style Philip Anselmo, while his roars (often still melodic) hearken back to a young Robb Flynn or Kirk Windstein. Needless to say, these are some legendary shoes to fill; yet Young seems to wear them quite comfortably. I'm not going to attempt to make any deep lyrical analysis here, but know that this is a soul-bearing record that speaks candidly of Young's darkest memories, often with dark, religious overtones (which I was predictably drawn to). It's venomous, painful, and often chilling in its intimacy. Twitching Tongues' first LP, *Sleep Therapy*, was great, excellent even, but I use no hyperbole when I say that *In Love There Is No Law* is a high point of the hardcore scene (perhaps matched only by releases from Starkweather, Between Earth & Sky, and Ringworm) in the past decade. Absolutely incredible. —Dave Williams (Closed Casket Activities)



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URINALS, THE:

Negative Capability: 2 x LP

The definitive collection of The Urinals finally available on vinyl. The Urinals were a seminal L.A. punk band, comprised of UCLA students too smart to learn their instruments. No band sounded like The Urinals and Los Angeles was lucky to have 'em—they certainly brought a different element to the scene and remain underappreciated. *Negative Capability* contains all of the known Urinals material in existence, including live shows (fidelity is surprisingly good) at venues like the Hong Kong Cafe (recorded by Paul Cutler no less). *Negative Capability* is an important record no fan of L.A. punk rock should be without. Be sure to pick up the recently released *100 Flowers* LP on Superior Viaduct as well. —Ryan Leach (In The Red)

URNS, THE: **Deep Web: LP**

The Weezer comparison is inevitable. But you *loved* Weezer, remember? Take away the ironic college geek chic and replace with actual disaffected youth and you've got a bangin' LP that drags the early '90s indie rock into the 2000-teens. The Urns bring slack rock back to the kids, sloppily careening close to falling apart before regaining control with a Superchunk lead, an ambient keyboard swirl, or a dissonant third guitar and topped with a swelling sing-along chorus. The LP showcases all these strengths, arguing that The Urns are a great band for either a sweaty basement or a nice venue with a

bumpin' sound system. Check it. —Matt Seward (Fat Sandwich)

VACATION CLUB: "Daydream"

b/w "Forest Babe": 7"

Although one supposes that comparison to quirky fellow Hoosier Staters like First Base and Charlie And The Skunks is inevitable ((or, perhaps, merely evitable)), what I think this record *really* sounds like is what *Beg, Borrow & Steal*-era Ohio Express would have sounded like if Lou Reed quit his job writing twerpy pop hits for Pickwick Records not to run off and shoot Drano® with Andy Warhol, but to write twerpy pop hits for Cameo-Parkway instead. IN OTHER WORDS, IT SOUNDS LIKE BOTH THE BANDS WHO DIDN'T SUCK IN 1968! *Watch your ass Bobby Kennedy!* BEST SONG: "Forest Babe" BEST SONG TITLE: I'll take either "The Black Angel's Death Song" or "It's Too Groovy," depending on which band that isn't Vacation Club we're talking about. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: There sure the hell are a lot of boobs on the covers of the records I've been assigned to review this month. —Rev Nørð (Randy!, randyrecords.blogspot.com)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

Big Neck Record Store Day: 7" EP

As the titled suggests, this is Big Neck's compilation contribution to this year's Record Store Day celebration. Populating the disc are one track each by the Livids, X Rays, Cheap Freaks, and Stop Worrying And Love The

Bomb. All are fine bits of high-octane garage-influenced punk and I'll go out on a limb and guess the tracks are exclusive to this release—if not, what would be the point, right? If you dig any of the bands, or just like yer swaggering caboose handed to you by bands meting out raucous rock'n'roll, this is definitely worth the green and the scramble. —Jimmy Alvarado (Big Neck)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: **Punk in the Trunk Bootlegs Vol. 1 – Live at Burger Records 7/19: CD**

Heller Keller play rapid, female-fronted punk and sing songs about cereal and air conditioning. Traps PS sound kinda like the A-Frames and sing songs about really deep shit I can hardly understand. Great Ghosts sound like Half Japanese trying to play the *Peanuts* theme backwards, and their song topics are not for mortal man to comprehend. Graphic Garrett tells jokes about drinking and manatees, and Suzy's Dead sound like a Californian version of Patrik Fitzgerald. I would say that this show probably beats whatever I was doing on July 19, but I looked back at my calendar and that was the day I sang "He's a Whore" with Die Kreuzen so I think we're going to call it a tie. BEST SONG: Heller Keller, "Cereal Killer" BEST SONG TITLE: Suzy's Dead, "Fuck July," though I do not agree with this statement. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Nonstandard slimline DVD case packaging ensures this CD will either be kept in a place of great prominence or else simply discarded!

Go big or go home! —Rev Nørð (Punk In The Trunk, soundcloud.com/punk-in-the-trunk)

VARIOUS ARTISTS:

Steelcap Love Affair: CD

A label sampler featuring twenty-one tracks of sub-Subs street punk, bad metal, shouts of "skinhead!", and enough macho-hoarse vocals to make a throat lozenge executive drool. Of particular note was the band The Clichés, who turn in a ditty called "Skinhead" with no apparent realization just how fitting their band name is. —Jimmy Alvarado (Spirit Of The Streets, spiritofthestreets.de)

VIOLENT ARREST / ENDLESS GRINNING SKULLS: **Split: 7"**

When I was fifteen some twenty-five years ago, I discovered hardcore around the Britcore era of '87/'88. I lived in the middle of nowhere and my only exposure to new music was through tape trading and writing to bands. One person I wrote to was Baz of Ripcord and Heresy (to this day two of my favorite bands). He turned me on to bands like SS Decontrol, Siege, and Mob 47 as well as sending me all his band's records. That part of my life was an education and I wouldn't trade it for a thing. Twenty-five years on, ¾ of Ripcord play in Violent Arrest, one of the best U.K. hardcore bands (and dare I say best anywhere?). Nothing wasted, short sharp jabs to the face and neck. SS Decontrol and Siege filtered through Bristol old timers. This shit is as good as

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it gets. EGS have a tough task but stand up well with their brutal d-beat banger. Discharge meets Doom with some Flat Earth early U.K. core styling. This shit is fresh as fuck. Comes with the new issue of *Artcore*, which is a banger too. Highly recommended. Year end top 10 business. —Tim Brooks (Artcore)

WASTOIDS: Self-titled: 7" EP

It's a theorem tested time and again: what do you get when you mix equal parts American hardcore and English oi? Fast, furious 'n' fuggin' pissed-off hardcore that would've had East Coast hardcore types peevin' in their pants circa-1981. These kids have the sound down pat, making for a disc that deftly straddles the sketchy line between "classic" and "timeless." —Jimmy Alvarado (Deranged)

WAU Y LOS ARRRGHS!!!:

Todo Roto: CD

Okay, this is the band you want. If you want a psych garage rock band raw and dirty like it just came out of the *Nuggets* collection, this is it. You're in the right place. Just go out and get this. This is fucking great. This is garage rock done right. Really, forget about all the other shit you've been hearing about. The lead singer of this Valencia band has a ragged, growling yell that calls to mind The Troggs and The Animals. An awesome Hammond organ plays over the back of the twangy guitars in every song. They have to be the best garage rock band I've heard since first hearing Reigning Sound. —Craven Rock (Slovenly, slovenly.com)

WHITE MURDER: "Arteries Are Flexible" b/w "Shutter Speed": 7"

I'm not a fan when bands put "Play loud!" on the record. It's like "Come up front and dance!" in a live setting. If you, as a band, bring the goods, those two things will happen naturally; don't try to be the "fun boss." White Murder doesn't engage in any such silliness. The come, they create a tense, anxious world, dual female vocals twirling like a malicious caduceus—slithery, viperous. It is beautiful and jagged, like the skylines of Cleveland and Los Angeles. Then White Murder stomp and destroy. They leave. Rubble. Done. But I've discovered something with their vinyl records: they sound even better when they're cranked. The notes *consume*. They *devour*. You get *immersed*. So, yeah. Play loud and the gifts exponentially increase. —Todd Taylor (Self-released, whitemurder.com)

WHO NEEDS YOU:

With Friends like These: 7"

The blandest of run-of-the-mill pop punk. There's simply nothing here to draw from or keep my attention. —Craven Rock (Drink Or Die)

WINTER BEAR: "Jump in the Fire" b/w "Should I Leave?": 7"

Erin Dorbin played in a couple bands I'd never heard before (Cave Weddings, The Spectras), and now I want to hear them. Winter Bear is her garage pop solo project, and her first single is raucous and sweet, direct and charming. She sounds almost like Juliana Hatfield

doing bubblegum. I keep picturing a soft sweater under a leather jacket, or a tattoo of a milkshake. It's that level. The only thing working against this record is that a lot of bands are doing something like this now—throwback garage girl group punk pop Ramones. But I don't know that most bands do it like she does—trebly and natural, sugary with a good roomy drum sound. I want to see what she does next. —Matt Werts (HoZac)

WOODEN PLANES: Demo: CD-R

First impressions go a long way and in this case they had me right at the start. The band has a sound that reminds me of the melodic punk coming out of the D.C. area during its heyday in the 1980s. I did some online research on Wooden Planes and couldn't find a listing for their hometown, but I did find a few fliers that had the band playing recent shows at clubs in the Chicago area so I'm assuming they are a Midwest-based outfit. Maybe that would explain why I'm hearing a Naked Raygun and Pegboy influence in their songs? I highly recommend checking out this release for a refreshing sound of days gone by. —Brent Nimz (Self-released, woodenplanes666@gmail.com, woodenplanes.bandcamp.com)

YOUNG AND IN THE WAY / MORAL VOID: Split: 7"

Moral Void are such an underrated band. Seeing this band play to like seven people and completely shred like nothing matters is really humbling. This is their second release and it's grittier than the last, but sounds more like their live sound

than their solo 7". They play this really good crusty metal/punk hybrid with really unique riffs. Very straightforward drumbeats make a good backbone to their sound. Young And In The Way aren't so underrated and have gotten their fair share of hype in the last year or so, but I'd say they are "appropriately rated." This side is a lot dirtier than their LPs (which doesn't translate as well as the Moral Void side), but I kind of like the sound and fits in well with their black metal vibe. There are about fifteen different versions of this record, so you'll be doing a lot of thinking about what color you want. —Ian Wise (Headfirst, headfirstrecords.limitedrun.com)

YOUTH AVOIDERS: Self-titled: LP

Sounds like hammers breaking faces, vans, and concrete. Sounds like lightning bolts coming from fingertips. Smells like ozone. Combine the cocky swagger of the Murder City Devils (at 45, not 33 1/3) and chain it to the slashy whack-a-do menace of DS-13 and the dark, bloody bark of Burial. Delivered by a rasp-strained, oxygen-deprived vocalist, they create a desperate thrum... and hook-saturated songs. Youth Avoiders thank Thin Lizzy and that's not an idle thanks. 2013 hardcore France's call-and-response to *Fighting*? I can't be the only one thinking that, can I? "A little more Phil Lynot afro in the monitors." Please tell me that someone in the band or the recording studio was thinking that really loud. Stellar. —Todd Taylor (Deranged)

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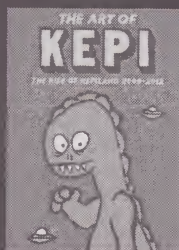
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- **Concrete Jungle**, PO Box 810 427, 90249 Nürnberg, Germany
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- **Cowabunga**, 311 Stearn Dr., Genoa, IL 60135
- **Deadbeat**, PO Box 361392, Cleveland, OH 44136
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“The angst
and velocity
of youth...”

—Tim Brooks
ARTCORE #31

ARTCORE #31, \$10, 8" x 10",
offset, 40 pgs.

Punk could be described as a culture of youth. Even if some of the participants are older, it is still driven by the angst and velocity of youth. I am infinitely more interested in new young bands than old fucks reforming; and, while I'm blasting through middle age, it's the youthful exuberance I still am drawn to in punk. Sometimes in this age of message boards and internet know-it-alls it's good to have a barometer, or a weather vane to know the lay of the land. When I was a kid I looked to *MRR* and a number of independent zines with strong voices. These days, kids run *MRR*, and the zines are all gone. Except *Artcore*: one of the first zines I ever saw when I was younger. Welly still puts out a few issues a year. Rather than retreat, he attacks, adding LPs and EPs to the impossible talk of self-publishing. As always, Welly is a great barometer of taste, one foot in the new Sickoids, Rough Kids, Endless Grinning Skulls, Domestics, Conquest For Death, Off, one in the past Chuck Dukowski, and the best write up of Italian hardcore ever written. There's Welly's frank reviews and editorial voice throughout. My only complaint is the tiny print overlaid and the over-desktop-published look. So, yeah, the only complaint is that it's almost too slick. Consistently one of the best. This issue comes with a Violent Arrest / Endless Grinning Skulls EP reviewed elsewhere. —Tim Brooks (artcore@ntlworld.com)

BENEATH THE SAME SKY #1, free, 11" x 17" folded, copied, 8 pgs.
This one's really more of a newsletter, I suppose, but to their credit the type is reaaaaally small and they pack in a lot of information here. According to the intro, this zine was ten years in the making. *BTSS* is a Seattle zine focusing on the Japanese screamo scene, which is apparently thriving. Features an interview with Tetola93, a show review, a few “best of 2012” lists (?), and a handful of album reviews. Also includes the download

code to a digital comp. Interesting for the fact that I have not even heard of a single one of the bands mentioned, but the writing and layout itself wasn't quite captivating enough to pull me in. Hopefully they'll spice things up for the next issue in 2025 or whatever. —Keith Rosson (Ryan Lewis, PO Box 383, Lynnwood, WA 98046)

CRUSH ZINE #3 \$2 (or trade), 5½" x 8½", copied, 31 pgs.
As an avid partisan of anything cute—i.e. cats, hearts, etc.—*Zine Crush* encompasses all of the above with a hint of nostalgia sweetly tied to that butterfly-infusing first crush feeling. As self-described on the front cover *even more confessions of like*, the zine is a collaborative collection of short stories and comics that brings that awkward teenage versions of ourselves back into memory, in a good way. The zine centers on creating a place to share infatuation with other “zinesters,” aka a good way of hearing about other zines and artists, a sort of public place of appraisal. In a community that encompasses sharing common goals, feelings, ideas, and interests; if this isn't pro-DIY I don't know what is. —Nicole Macias (Zine Crush, PO Box 936, Portland, OR 97207, zinecrush.com)

DREAMS AND DONUTS #17, \$2ppd, 8½" x 11", copied, 44 pgs.
The interview with Jim, who walked from Sacramento to Seattle, is inspirational. Although I've hitchhiked across America a few times in my twenties, (and unfortunately, walked for a few days across Iowa when I couldn't catch a ride), I've always wanted to explore the country on foot. In the interview, Jim describes his depression and his desire to go for a long walk in search for freedom and adventure. I was also impressed with his honesty and openness in describing his depression. Issue #17 also includes a few stories in comic form about a trip to Oakland, drive-in theaters, and shitty Christmases. —Steve Hart (Heather Wreckage, 3913 Boyle Ct, Sacramento, CA 95817)

EXPLODING BUFFALO #5, copied, 5½" x 8½", 44 pgs.
Essays, stories, and comics about how social media has changed our lives. Couples check each other's texts, people look at their phones instead of where they're walking, and Facebook turns steadfast luddites into attention whores. There are no huge revelations here, but this L.A. crew has assembled a diverse and high-quality set of art, all revolving around the same theme. That ain't easy. —Chris Terry (explodingbuffalo.com)

FACIAL DISOBEDIENCE #8, 50p, 5½" x 8½", copied, 24 pgs.
Probably my favorite zine in recent memory, at least in the past year or two. Layout's no great shakes—mostly just straight text, but Phil has, for a few issues now, crafted a zine that toes the line so perfectly between the personal and the political, with such grace and controlled anger that I can't help but be floored. This guy is such a great writer, and his writing evokes so much: DIY culture. City living. Love. Booze. The struggle between age and ethics as you find yourself headlong into your thirties and still grasping with so many of the same questions you did as a kid. *Punk*. Personal zines are hard to manage without being either one long inside joke or so bleakly self-revealing you feel like you're reading someone's poorly crafted diary. *Facial Disobedience* sidesteps all of that because of its relevance, the obvious strength of its writing, and its cautious self-awareness. It's a personal zine working within the aforementioned themes, but still edging toward the universal and profound. Sounds like a lot, but like I said, I loved the hell out of this one. Most definitely recommended. —Keith Rosson (philchokeword@aol.com)

HEARTBREAK CITY #1, \$2, 8½" x 11", copied, 45 pgs.
I wasn't sure I was ready to read this zine. I'm still reeling from my divorce and I thought reading about other people's breakups would bum me out.

However, despite the subject matter, I appreciated the honesty in this collection of break-up stories. I guess I'm not the only one who has ever had their heart broken. Plus, naming a zine after a Cars song (I hope) is always a good idea. *Heartbreak City* could have been a huge drag to read, but they eschew the self-indulgent whininess of a breakup; instead, they focus on what happened and what it felt like to them. —Steve Hart (Heartbreakcity@ymail)

I AM MY OWN STEREOTYPE: THE MY SMALL DIARY COLLECTION, \$5, 8½" x 5½" perfect bound, 112 pgs.
In this collection of decades of diary comics from Delaine Derry Green, each entry presented as a one-page highlight reel of recent events in the author/artist's life. Example: “We went to a combo party: a birthday + a final celebration before Jamie got sent to military prison for pot.” Delaine's comic perfectly captures the art of the diary comic in that the events she chooses to focus on seem both exciting and commonplace. If one of these things happened to me, it wouldn't give me pause but because it's happening to someone else, I am reminded that the everyday is awesome. This collection is great for someone who's thinking about starting their own diary comic. —Bianca Barragani (etsy.com/shop/delainederry, delangel3@hotmail.com)

JERK STORE #12, \$?, 8½" x 11", printed, 50 pgs.
Jam-packed with interviews, reviews, and high-resolution photos, *Jerk Store* #12 is an essential read. I really enjoyed the interview with Negative Reinforcement, a powerviolence type of band from the Perth area. They are willing to talk shit and express their opinions honestly. It seems like a lot of bands hold back a little bit in interviews, not wanting to hurt their chances at getting a “big show” or pissing someone off. Negative Reinforcement doesn't seem concerned with careerism.

Another highlight of *Jerk Store* is their willingness to sprinkle in articles featuring older bands and albums. I pulled out my copy of *Flipside Vinyl Fanzine* #1 and gave it a spin, being reminded how essential that album was to my exposure to new bands back in the day. *Jerk Store* is highly recommended. —Steve Hart (PO Box 284, Maylands, West Australia, 6931, Australia)

LESCARNETS de RASTAPOPOULOS #2, \$?, 9" x 12", copied, 16 pgs. The best part of punk rock, maybe even better than the music itself, is making friends all over the world. I loved having my zine reviewed in

MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL #364, \$4, 8 1/4" x 10 3/4", newsprint, 128 pgs. Yay! The new issue of *MRR*, packed full of the stuff you have come to expect from them: record, zine and book reviews aplenty along with insightful interviews with RAD, Trashies, and Last Chaos, among others. I was sad to see that the situation with longtime columnist Mykel Board is still ongoing (in the last *MRR* I reviewed, Board was being skewered over a column the coordinators refused to print) that ultimately led to his firing, which was touched on in this issue. Perhaps this is not related, but longtime coordinator Mariam is out and I suppose the next

monsters. I find most of it extremely corny. However, the writing is strong with a sly sense of humor which made *Psycho.Moto Zine* an enjoyable read. —Steve Hart (Antagonist Press, Antagonistart@aol)

READ ONCE AND DESTROY: A COMPILATION \$4, 4 1/4" x 4 1/4" copied, 60 pgs. When I first saw the cover of *Read Once and Destroy*, I bought it for the cover art. It has a striking image of an Ouija board, which immediately grabbed my attention. There is a lot of information to process from this zine. Even though it's a quarter page

RECKLESS CHANTS #19, \$4 + postage, 8 1/2" x 5 1/2" copied, 68 pgs. To me, the best thing about zines is that you get to experience some deeply personal aspects of another person's life through their own words and impressions. Visiting old crusty hangouts in Chicago, drinking coffee that has outrageous flavors (coconut mocha?!), and watching as Rust Belt Jessie maneuvers through her expansive corner of the Midwest punk scene, I fully felt that I was living the life of another person—perzine success! The zine is initially structured around music—a song title introduces a story and the song weaves itself through

“Highlight: ‘When your mother wants to read your zines to see if there are any ‘lesbian undertones,’ only give her the ones about boys.’”

—Bianca Barragan | *RECKLESS CHANTS* #19

MRR and *Flipside* because I knew I'd get letters from people from places I had never heard of. My introduction to Norway was a band called Bannlyst, who sent me their 7" record for review—the tentacles of punk rock spanned the globe. Similarly, the author of *Les Carnets* had a stable of pen pals from twenty-five years ago, and in this issue (and the previous one), he describes the process of finding the people he corresponded with, and in some cases, what they are doing now. This is an interesting concept, however, I'd like to get more in-depth writing on some of the more interesting people rather than a brief overview. —Steve Hart (Les Carnets de Rastopoulous, 2-7 Larch St., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1R6W4)

MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL #363, \$4, 8 1/2" x 11", newsprint, 128 pgs. I still get giddy when I get *MRR* in the mail. *Maximum Rock'n'Roll* delivers shit-tons of punk goodness. Each issue covers punk subculture, politics, world events, insightful columns written by a diverse range of punks, reviews of all sorts, and interviews. Hell, they even had a crossword puzzle this month! I might never leave the bathroom again! This month's *MRR* features interviews with bands Las Otras, Sudor, Stillsuit, Taquila Mockingbird, Toinen Vaihtohto, R.O.T.T.E.R. and No Mistake, just to name a few. And, honestly, I dug the punk parents comic. I'm partial, ya know. *MRR* usually gives a good balance of viewpoints for all things punk, and this issue does not disappoint. Damn good stuff. —Camille Reynolds (MRR, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146, maximumrocknroll.com)

issue will welcome her replacement Ari. Welcome, Ari! Back to the issue, most columns are good reads, as usual, though I swear that George Tabb's is a rehash from a previous column which sucked, as I usually always find it to be a great read. Oh well, I guess there is always next month! —Garrett Barnwell (MRR, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146, maximumrocknroll.com)

MUSIC MAGAZINE #1, \$7, 8 1/2" x 5 1/2" glossy/perfect bound, 42 pgs. This is definitely the most eclectic music zine I've ever read. Where else will you read an interview with the drummer from Semisonic, Naked Eyes, and a review of the Breeders' *LSXX*? The editor says that he is tired of seeing "older music" get passed over just because it's not new anymore. As someone who really enjoys Naked Eyes ("Promises, Promises" and "Always Something There to Remind Me" are definitely going to make an eleventh-hour appearance in my karaoke repertoire after reading this zine), I was glad to have to reexamine bands that I'd forgotten about or hadn't listened to in awhile. That said, after lending an ear to some of the bands I hadn't already heard, I didn't feel like I'd been missing out on anything. —Bianca Barragan (etsy.com/shop/josephkhyle)

PSYCHO.MOTO ZINE #19, \$?, 8 1/2" x 11", full color copied, 22 pgs. Apparently, this is the monster issue which covers zombies, vampires, and aliens. The fictional story of Prince Iluntasuna, by Patrick Craig, is especially well-written. It reminds me of Christopher Moore's vampire books, when he narrates from the first-person viewpoint of a vampire. Normally, I'm not a big fan of anything to do with

format, Julia Eff fills each line of paper with two lines of writing. You will either feel like you're getting your money's worth for that much content or you might just feel overwhelmed. Whatever you feel going into this, if your eyes need glasses then now is their time. I liked her layout, breaking up her stories with dramatic cutouts almost every other page. I don't know if it's more than just a strategy trying to fit a large amount of information into sixty pages but when I was holding her zine to read it was always inches away from my face. I found myself completely immersed in her stories and committing myself to the situations she is writing about. I had a good time. The zine is "A Compilation" of autobiographical experiences, in Detroit starting with an open letter to writers and zine makers. Eff goes on to name people like Adam Gnade, Alex Wreck, and Jim Goad, rhetorically asking them if "...this is the shit you think about... why are you still doing this... is this art?" She continues to list her reasons for writing and anyone who has published their own zine will relate with enthusiasm. Most of her stories in this zine revolved around her angst and troubles with mental illness, which isn't the freshest theme for a zine but the stories are lovely and well written with the passion and anger of someone who was told their whole life that they were weird and not in a good way. Oh yeah, the majority of the second half is a list of reasons explaining why she wrote a zine about Columbine and how an extreme zero tolerance environment affected her school life. I very much enjoyed this zine and her dramatic cynicism. —Simon Sotelo (foxandowl.org)

the story—but gradually the structure stretches as the stories take over. Jessie has so many to tell. I especially liked her advice, listed in a section called, "You Don't Meet Nice Girls in Copy Shops." Highlight: "When your mother wants to read your zines to see if there are any 'lesbian undertones,' only give her the ones about boys." —Bianca Barragan (Reckless Chants, Jessica McMains, PO Box 85278, Racine, WI 53408, coeur.de.fantome@gmail.com)

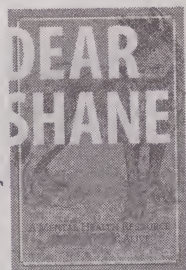
RIPPLE ROCK #1, \$8ppd, 6" x 8", copied with 3-D cover, 76 pgs. To celebrate the first year of Jesse's radio show (called Ripple Rock), he decided to transcribe ten of the twenty-five interviews he conducted and release them as a big ol' pretty-looking zine. The end product is awesome because it contains well-conducted interviews with people I actually care about, like Nardwuar, Red Dons, Eric Oblivian, Mike Watt, and more. Plus while the design is all cut and paste, it reads very clearly. And to top all that off, the cover is in 3-D, and every issue comes with a pair of 3-D glasses, which I can always use another pair of. You can never find them when you need them. My only complaint is that some of the interviews are transcribed too literally. Editing out all the filler words would definitely improve the flow of the conversations. That aside, this is without a doubt, my new favorite zine made by a Canadian living in Finland. —Daryl (Jesse Gehlen, Koulukatu 17815, 80100 Joensuu, Finland / ripplerockradio@gmail.com)

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING #67, \$2 + stamps, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2", copied, 44 pgs. This is most definitely a "per"zine, as the editor really likes to go into detail

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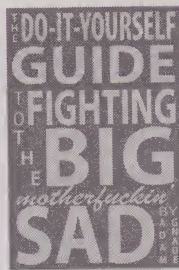
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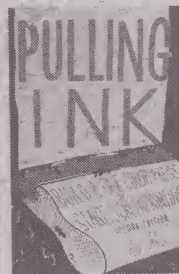
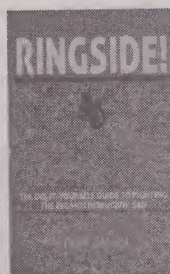
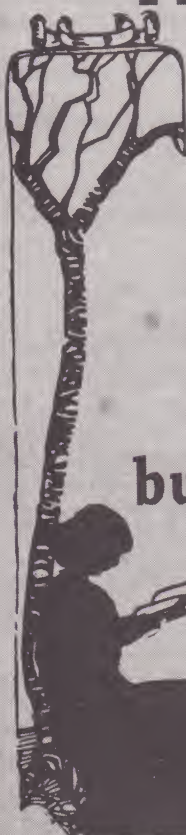
by Olivier Matthon



Under the nose of authorities, migrant pickers supply wild edibles for some of the fanciest restaurants in the country. Matthon gives a firsthand account of living and working in these northern Californian seasonal communities.

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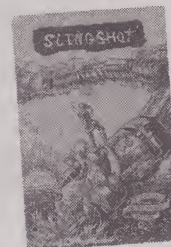
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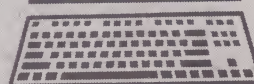
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and share even the most mundane information at times in his articles. What made me grab this out of the box at *Razorcake* HQ was the article on most of the 7 Seconds records. I was way into 7 Seconds back in the 1980s, and, like many, started losing interest in them around the time *New Wind* came around, and increasingly drew back as they began releasing one stinker after another. But I was interested to see what someone who seems a bit younger than I had to say about their records. The editor proves to be a much stronger fan than I ever was. He gives us reviews of (just about) everything from *Skins*, *Brains*, & *Guts to Take It Back*, *Take It On*, *Take It Over*. Mixed with a bit of personal recollection and information, this makes for a good read. It definitely had me pulling out records I have not listened to, much less thought about, in about twenty years. The other articles are of varying quality. The piece about the editor's birthday road trip was uneventful. The piece about all the different Indian restaurants he ate at over the years may come in handy if you live around Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois. I enjoyed bits and pieces of the lead article about putting in twelve years at a convenience store. Sort of like *Clerks*, but without playing hockey

on the roof. There are also some zine and beverage reviews at the end. —M.Avr (516 Third St NE, Massillon, OH 44646)

STOWAWAYS, THE #14, \$2, 8 1/2" x 11", copied, 24 pgs.

The Stowaways is a slapdash xeroxed document that embodies the urgency and variety of Southern California's DIY punk scene. For all its aesthetic blemishes (which somehow enhances the earnestness), Chris Gordon's refreshingly self-assured voice and proudly anti-revisionist stream-of-consciousness format ensures that each issue is a home run. The show reviews might be fascinating only to California residents or those interested in the diary-like minutia of people watching, but there are many worthy humorous observations such as: "The lead singer looked like the dirtiest fucking sewer rat....He literally looked like a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles' character." With every new issue, I am reminded of the DIY community's open-mindedness by the growth of *The Stowaways'* letter column. I am also reminded of *Field of Dreams*: "If you build it, they will come." —Sean Arenas (Chris Gordon, 5802 Wendover Rd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886, fuckthestowaways.blogspot.com)

UNDER A BROKEN STREET

LAMP, \$5, 4 1/4" x 11", copied, ? pgs.

This is a chapbook of stories written by Michael Essington and David Gurz, two "punk writers" (as they call themselves) from the West and East coasts, respectively. The odd dimensions of the work caught my attention, and made me curious to dig into these stories. Essington has a story about a guy who has ruined his life by running off his job with a girl who is half his age. He follows this up with a poem. Gurz has a tale about a punk prostitute who kills men she sleeps with. Both are obviously darker tales, but it's the seediness and grit that intrigued me. There were points where the writing could be improved upon by changing some wording or structure and the ideas behind the stories reminded me of something I might have written years ago (and I don't want to really read stuff that is anything like what I would have written). Supposedly, this is the first of four chapbooks and while it didn't totally bowl me over, I am enticed to see what stories the future chapbooks hold. —Kurt Morris (Michael Essington, 17105 Roscoe Blvd. #3, Northridge, CA 91325)

UNFORTUNATE MISHAPS IN AVIATION HISTORY, \$2,

5 1/2" x 8 1/2", copied, 12 pgs.

True stories of unusual deaths make for the perfect counterbalance to

Gennis's artwork. Straddling the fence between caricature and realism, Gennis, with bold black strokes, is able to coldly render facts, as well as dark humor, with surgical precision. Franz Reichelt and S.A. Andrée both failed, but Gennis is able to depict their tragedies with scathing irony. Reichelt fell to his death from the Eiffel Tower while attempting to construct a workable parachute, but only two days before, an American successfully parachuted from the Statue of Liberty. S.A. Andrée and his crew attempted to hot air balloon to the North Pole—they quickly became the stuff of mysteries until their bones were discovered over thirty-three years later. Sure, Gennis is affirming that life is cruel—and bleakly humorous—and that the irreproachable machinations of chaos are endless, but a few pages of great comic storytelling is somehow able to make some sense of it. The zine is bookended with annotations and a selected bibliography in case you wish to delve deeper. Support her work and pick up something with her name on it. Highly recommended. —Sean Arenas (emigennis.com)



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Fan Interference, a Collection of Baseball Rants and Reflections

Edited by Mike Faloon and Steve Reynolds, 226 pgs.

I spend most of my days off either reading about, writing about, thinking about, listening to, playing, coaching, or watching baseball. That long black hole that exists between the final out of the World Series and the day pitchers and catchers report needs to be filled by something baseball-related. I can't stand hand-egg (football), or hockey, so wintertime is a frustrating time for baseball fanatics like me. That being said, how the

driving force behind *Left of the Dial* magazine, and has penned a book or two highlighting different aspects of the subculture. This time 'round, he strives to shed some light on punk's underlying ethos "from the bottom up, directly from the participants, the pursuers of dreams, the folk of punk, the informants, the living actors," as he explains in his introductory essay.

This translates to a collection twenty-one interviews that stretch back into the non-NY/U.K.-centric part of punk's veritable "big bang," what followed in its wake, how its excesses were stripped down and honed into a direct assault weapon against the status quo and, indirectly, how that weapon has dulled over time and what's been lost with the massive infusion of corporate sponsorship and money into the punk scene. In addition to the usual go-to punk talking heads—the names MacKaye, Morris, Biafra, Sensible, Watt, Grisham, and Dictor are likely recognizable to those with a slightly more than passing interest in punk—Ensminger also has the wisdom to query folks one doesn't run into quite as often these days about punk's impact on them: Gary Floyd, Fred "Freak" Smith, U-Ron Bondage, Peter Case, and Greg Turner, among many others.

While there is much history packed into these interviews, including a nice oral history of legendary San Francisco venue the Deaf Club, it is less a history lesson in the strictest sense than an attempt to document the threads of punk's ideological framework, its common core motivations, and its unspoken philosophies. Ensminger's effectiveness in doing so is dependent on the reader's level of attention—the passing reader will find interesting, engaging, and lively discussions about how this motley group of individuals live(d) and where they are coming from as artists. Buried inside the discussions, however, are glimpses of the DIY ethic wielded by these and other outsiders to subvert and directly challenge a world that continues to value homogeneity and disdains anyone or anything that dares not to fit in. Scholars and historians will find it of great use in adding some depth and perspective to their efforts. Newer punks looking to cut through nearly two decades of corporate-spoon-fed misinformation and bullshit and wishing to reconnect with what made punk such a threat in the first place will find much here indispensable. —Jimmy Alvarado (PM Press, PO Box 23912, Oakland, CA 94623)

"Although he hates Mondays and loves lasagna, Garfield's never peed in a beer can mid-set offstage during a Ghost Knife set."

—Todd Talyor, *Snake Pit Gets Old: Daily Diary Comics 2010-2012*

hell did I miss *Zisk* fanzine? Baseball stories that are funny, irreverent, personal and entertaining? Thankfully, *Zisk* has put together this interesting collection of baseball stories for the long winter months to keep baseball fans satiated. This also features Razorcake's Todd Taylor and Sean Carswell. Get this. Now. —Steve Hart (Blue Cubicle Press, PO Box 250382, Plano, TX 75025-0382)

Hunter, The (and the other novels in the Parker series)

By Richard Stark

Breaking Bad ended a week ago as I write this. Why did I love it? Because of its character study of a good man gone bad? Or its portrait of an America that something something something? No, no, no. I loved it because its writers labored over answering the question, *How's he going to pull this off?*

Crime novelist Donald E. Westlake, writing under the name Richard Stark, labored similarly on his series of crime novels about the professional thief known only as Parker, introduced as cheap paperback originals in 1962, now reissued as much classier paperbacks (I don't mean that as a slam; the design is appealingly spare) by the University of Chicago.

If Raymond Chandler is jazz, Richard Stark is punk. Here's the semi-legendary opening line from the first novel in the series *The Hunter*: "When a fresh-faced guy in a Chevy offered him a lift, Parker told him to go to hell." Before 1962, there weren't many novels with a cold-hearted bastard as protagonist. That's probably why novels this good were first published as paperback originals, like Iceberg Slim's books about pimps and con artists were.

Hard, lean page-turners about well-plotted heists that you get to watch unfold, then something generally goes wrong, thanks to bastards even more cold-hearted than Parker, and you get to watch Parker figure out how to set things "right." *How's he going to pull this off?* Dig in. —Jim Woster (The University of Chicago Press, 1427 E. 60th St., Chicago, IL 60637, press.uchicago.edu)

Left of the Dial: Conversations with Punk Icons

By David Ensminger, 320 pgs.

Ensminger is no stranger to punk rock—he's been around the scene since at least the mid-'80s, was a member of Texas Biscuit Bombs, was the

Outlaw Efforts

By Natalie Jacobson and Joey Maltese, 116 pgs.

Outlaw Efforts is a graphic novel written by Natalie Jacobson and drawn by Joey Maltese about the trials and tribulations of Maxi, a touring punk band's driver. I say punk band, but the band is fronted by a fashion-conscious diva whose ambitions seem to be purely about money and controlling men. It makes one wonder, what does this woman want to do with a punk band? I refuse to believe that I'm misattributing the band's genre. The book is blazoned with quotes from Agnostic Front and Nausea members, as well as in-story references to Crass being the last sacred thing to ever touch the planet earth. By which I mean, two characters, while casually talking about another topic entirely, turn skyward and point to a picture of Steve Ignorant as an aside. Not to nitpick, but for a comic book about a band that's eighty percent female, I think it would have been more appropriate to have a picture of Joy De Vivre or Eve Libertine.

As both a hardcore comic book nerd and a punk rock fanatic, I'm displeased with this book on a number of levels. There are a lot of cases where the art fluctuates wildly. Character designs range from overly detailed to simplistically cartoonish. One character has no visible nose, while every other character does. The larger problem is that the book contains two parallel storylines which don't really complement each other as much as they fight for attention. The band storyline takes up a good chunk of the book, so much so that the other storyline—Maxi's criminal record and subsequent police investigation—seems like it belongs to an entirely different book.

The writing suffers from giving way too much information. Literally every panel has text even when none is necessary. When a panel has a person entering a car, there is no need for a caption saying the same thing. If you don't trust your artist to get this message across, work with a different artist.

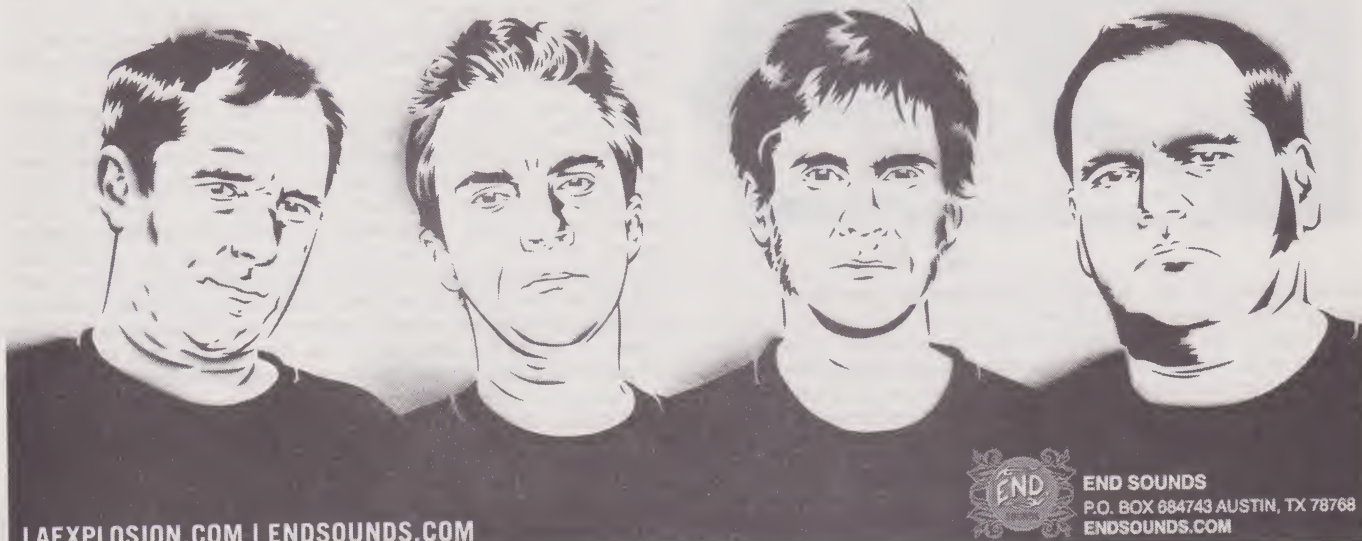
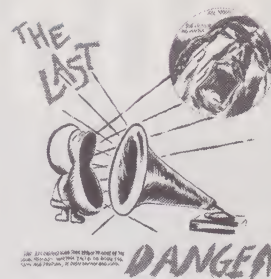
Side characters tend to be broad caricatures, like the rich man whose pockets are overflowing with money. Main characters have more personalities, but often when they're left to argue amongst each other, their fights don't sound real. Well, I suppose their fights are real enough inasmuch

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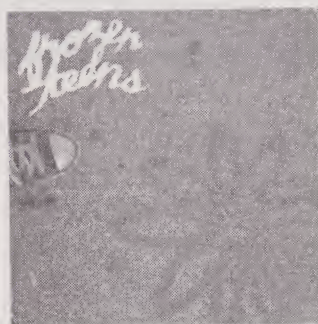
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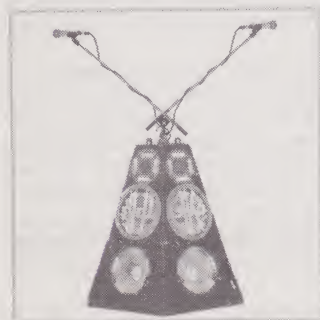
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that two people with those opinions wouldn't get along, but I have a hard time believing that if a real band fought about the same topics that they would have continued being a band for more than a few days.

Then there's the huge problem of the book's overall design. Awful font choices and ugly word balloons create an atmosphere of an MS Paint-produced book. This book is filled with a lot of mistakes with a story that's not necessarily bad, but uneven. One final thing, it's a cardinal sin to present your story as if it's complete only to have end with "to be continued..." Grade: D. —Bryan Static (Swamp Road LLC, PO Box 94, Stuartsville, NJ 08886)

Snake Pit Gets Old: Daily Diary Comics 2010-2012

By Ben Snakepit, 288 pgs.

Those unfamiliar with Ben Snakepit, he's a DIY punk who draws three panels, every day of the year, with a soundtrack song at the top, peppered with movie suggestions. The comics are more simple line drawings—visually more "three chords punk" than Frank Fazetta.

These collections that span years are my favorites because multiple subtleties come into play. Think of Ben's panels as pixels. A cross page spread is twenty-four pixels displayed together. It can often be surprising when you step back, let all the pixels soak in, and then see Ben's schooner of a life sailing in a particular direction. It can be oddly touching. It's often hilarious. It's often mundane.

Ben lives a largely typical life in many ways. Work. Video games and television. Eating. Pet care. Relationships. He's also an ethical musician and a comic book artist who has over a decade of self-discipline under his belt.

Certain weeks—sometimes months—of Ben's life have the feel of the repetitious backgrounds to old Hanna-Barbera cartoons. A self-observed life, distilled to three daily panels, especially on days when nothing really happened, can be an act of humility. (Ben often draws himself as a pile of poo, a day wasted.) Over three years, Ben grows. His worldview shifts slightly. The daily footsteps don't look like much. Life's like that. 1,096 days and 3,285 panels later, Ben quit the video store, gets used to his job at a print shop, is thinking about losing weight, and decides to not give up drawing comics. Thankfully, *Snakepit* is not a purely self-indulgent, self-absorbed, too-center-of-the-universe "memoir" comic book faking a life that looks good on paper. The honest mundanity makes days when he proposes to and then marries Karen all that more special.

The world is also a much different place than 2001, when Ben started doing these comics, 13,140 panels ago. 56k modems. Cell phones just made phone calls. Myspace didn't start until 2003. If anything, I find Ben more relevant than ever. This 2013 media world is a world of instants. A world of endless distractions. Depthless metrics. Con-sump-tion. Dollar signs eating their own tails.

Ben's always been a little bit cagey in *Snakepit*. He appreciates the power of secrets kept and he's largely adept at living a private life while having a "paper" public persona. I've known Ben for over a decade now and I can happily say that I've never seen his erect penis in an email or online. In *Snakepit*, he respects his own privacy, knows when to stop, realizing there may be future job applications to fill out, in-laws to see again face-to-face. So instead of seeing him have sex in comics, it's left to the imagination. ("Then we did some *Valentine shit*," and the panel says "*Too hot for Snakepit*.") There's even a black bar over Ben's wang in the panel about a kidney stone in one of the funniest drawings in *Snakepit* history. ("*I failed to mention yesterday but the doctor stuck a camera up my dickhole*.") Then Ben went to work. Then one of the three bands he's in played Beerland.

I've often thought that DIY punk years are like animal years. Punks just put more into every single day. It ages some a lot quicker than others—drugs, sleeplessness, hustlin' to get ends to meet. On the cover, Ben makes fun of himself. He's holding his aging back, shaking a cane, and looks like he's yelling, "Get off my lawn!" I like the older Ben. He observes and comments on the slow encroachment of the "suburban life of the mind"—health issues, responsibilities that come with paying rent, sharing paying bills, and keeping a vehicle in working order.

I also like what Ben has not become. Although his rebounds from partying are harder and he works in an office environment, he's not quite Dilbert. ("*I think getting stoned and going to Fry's is one of my favorite ways to spend a Saturday morning*.") He's not quite Kathy. ("*Today is Saturday and I've made some bad decisions*." Second panel: "*Next, I got drunk with money I was supposed to use for toilet paper*." Speech bubble, X'd out eyes, "*I'm 38*.") He's not quite Charlie Brown, but often close. ("*Then we joylessly ate a pizza*."). Although he hates Mondays and loves lasagna, Garfield's never peed in a beer can mid-set offstage during a Ghost Knife set. Most thankfully, Ben is not a member of Family Circus. ("*Shaking hands with a monkey wearing a hat and pants might be the best thing that*

ever happened to me."") But he's relatable as an honest, flawed, creative person, and—if we're just looking at *Snakepit* purely as text and images—as a compelling character.

For deceptively looking like he's not doing much at any given time, Ben Snakepit's "drawing like nobody's reading," is some of my favorite comics of all time—and you thought the beat slowed down... —Todd Taylor (Birdcage Bottom Books, 324-A West 71st St., NY, NY 10023)

Why We Drive: The Past, Present, and Future of Automobiles in America

By Andy Singer, 160 pgs.

Driving in and around Los Angeles is a full-time job. The traffic is seemingly endless (and tedious), the drivers are absentminded, and just as a major road is repaved, a pothole appears somewhere nearby only moments after you've replaced your tires. Every time I start my '95 Toyota Corolla, I am met by a wave of anxiety that something will be horribly wrong (Is it my starter? My distributor? Will the whole damn thing go up in smoke?) And if my car is broken, then I'm stranded until help arrives. Andy Singer argues that it just doesn't have to be this way and that cars, as a "romanticized object," are a major source of unneeded stress—I'm one to agree...even though I realize I realistically won't quit driving.

Singer uses illustrations accompanied by hard facts to construct his argument. Firstly, he addresses the multitude of problems caused by cars. It's not just pollution. It's not just congestion and noise. Cars have irreparably altered our surrounding landscapes and our way of life. Highways have obliterated the possibility of efficient housing and drained city life of any color and vibrancy. Instead of pulsing downtown districts, we are left with commercial ghost towns and seven-story parking structures as highway systems have created a discrepancy between where we live and where we play. All of which is separated by miles and miles of pavement. This pavement, or the "open road," is synonymous with freedom, but Singer argues that these desolate stretches actually tether and bind us in a death grip.

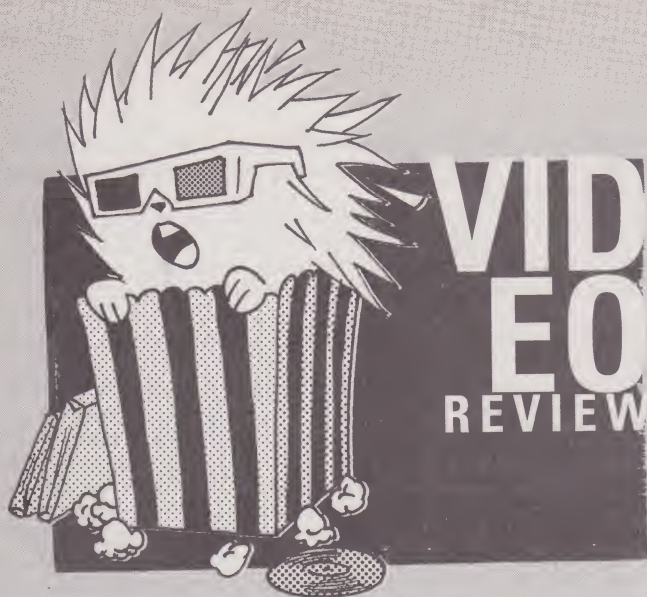
Thinking back, cars and commutes splayed my family into divergent directions: Every morning my parents went off to work and my brothers and I went off to school. Social interactions were mitigated into formal outings that always required money...and directions. Things have only worsened as I've gotten older. Singer illustrates that we are no longer a "community" but a society of islands, yet we have fooled ourselves into believing that we are more connected than ever before. But the rise of long distance separation is directly the result of our faith in automobiles. Singer's cultural analysis is thought-provoking but too brief. The introductory portion needed to be twice as long and far more in-depth as it really cuts bone deep.

The second portion of the book delves into the political climates that created our dependency on automobiles. It's no surprise that crooked politicians and corporate entities are partly to blame. General Motors and its partners successfully dismantled America's public transportation systems making way for freeways. But the rest of the buck is passed onto our shoulders as willing participants. We have bought into the glitz and glamor of cruising. I inherited my car envy from my older brothers who inherited it from our parents who fell victim to the automobile industry's marketing. The issue is polemical. Cars are a status symbol and public transportation has been disparaged if not, in some areas, completely destroyed. We are painfully aware that we have opened our wallets and allowed for our cash to be siphoned off by the gas pump—but the major issue is that we do so because we think we must. Our impetus to drive has literally been institutionalized.

Finally, Singer provides various solutions and suggestions such as bike riding, becoming politically involved in your local government, and, frankly, the most radical notion is being content with where you live. Ignoring the glare of airline advertisements and weekend getaways and, instead, becoming a stable fixture in your community is a radical act in and of itself. Singer's suggestions are optimistic but his tone is never chastising; he remains steadfast and constructive.

Pick up this book if you're interested in a slap of reality. It's short, consistent, and concise. Singer's art is pleasantly reminiscent of '60s satire like R. Crumb and Kim Deitch. The language is never obtuse or overly academic. The perfect read for while you're stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic. And, hopefully, it will compel you to take the next exit. —Sean Arenas (Microcosm, 636 SE 11th Ave. Portland, OR 97214, microcosmpublishing.com)





Anything Boys Can Do... and Mark of the Ninja: DVD

This DVD is comprised of two documentaries, *Anything Boys Can Do...* and *Mark of the Ninja*. *Anything...* is a music documentary about early- to mid-1990s underground female bands, specifically on the Lower East Side of New York City. *Mark of the Ninja* is an art documentary about the Antagonist Art Movement (who are also the group that put out this DVD).

Anything... comes in at a little over an hour and is the more interesting of the two docs. It's obviously dated ('90s fashion is something I'd like to forget ever happened), but some of the music is quite good. Some of the bands covered include Tribe 8, The Voluptuous Horror Of Karen Black, Sexpod, Thrust, and more. Throughout the doc there are multiple threads occurring in regards to arguments that take place in this scene of

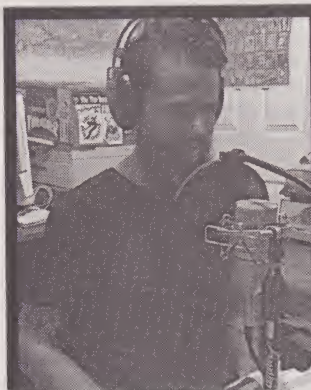
bands primarily comprised of women. First, there is an argument about feminism (who is a feminist and why?), but there is also an argument about music vs. performance. Some people think the bands should be good musically, and that a provocative performance, while interesting, doesn't do much to promote women in music if the music itself isn't very good. *Anything...* does a fine job at showing the various positions of women and what their views are on all sorts of female-related issues. There is a lot going on here and while it's not the most well-shot doc, it does move along at a good pace and really seems to give the women a place to speak their minds about their views on punk, gender, sexuality, and themselves.

The second documentary on the DVD, *Mark of the Ninja*, is about the Antagonist Art Movement, an artist collective out of New York City. This was made in 2004, so I'm not clear as to how much this describes the current state of the group. However, for a bunch of people who are supposed to be antagonists, I didn't find the art they were doing as provocative or antagonistic. It seemed like a lot of average art. Granted, it wasn't still life paintings of bowls of fruit, but it wasn't anything close to *Piss Christ*, either. Some guy coloring on the back of dollar bills! Call Secret Service! Putting up stickers of your art movement on street signs! Call the police! Having a bunch of white guys who can't rap try and do so! Enough already. I can appreciate the interest in bringing together artists—and it's great to find community amongst fellow human beings who share a belief in something you hold dear—but I don't see why anything this group does would need to be documented on video, then pressed onto DVD and shared with others.

What this DVD should have been is just *Anything Boys Can Do...* along with any relevant deleted scenes and follow-ups with the women whose bands originally appeared in the documentary to find out how their views on feminism, punk, gender, sexuality, and music have changed over the years, if at all. Everything else could easily have been left out. —Kurt Morris (antagonistmovement.com)



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